



12.11.6
3039

THE TAJ



22881

AND

ITS ENVIRONMENTS

WITH

8 ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS,
ONE MAP AND 4 PLANS.

BY

MAULVI MOIN-UD-DIN AHMAD,

KACHEHRIGHAT, AGRA

WITH

A FOREWORD BY

913.05
Moi
KHAN SAHIB, SAIYAD ABU MOHAMMAD, M.A., U.P.C.S.

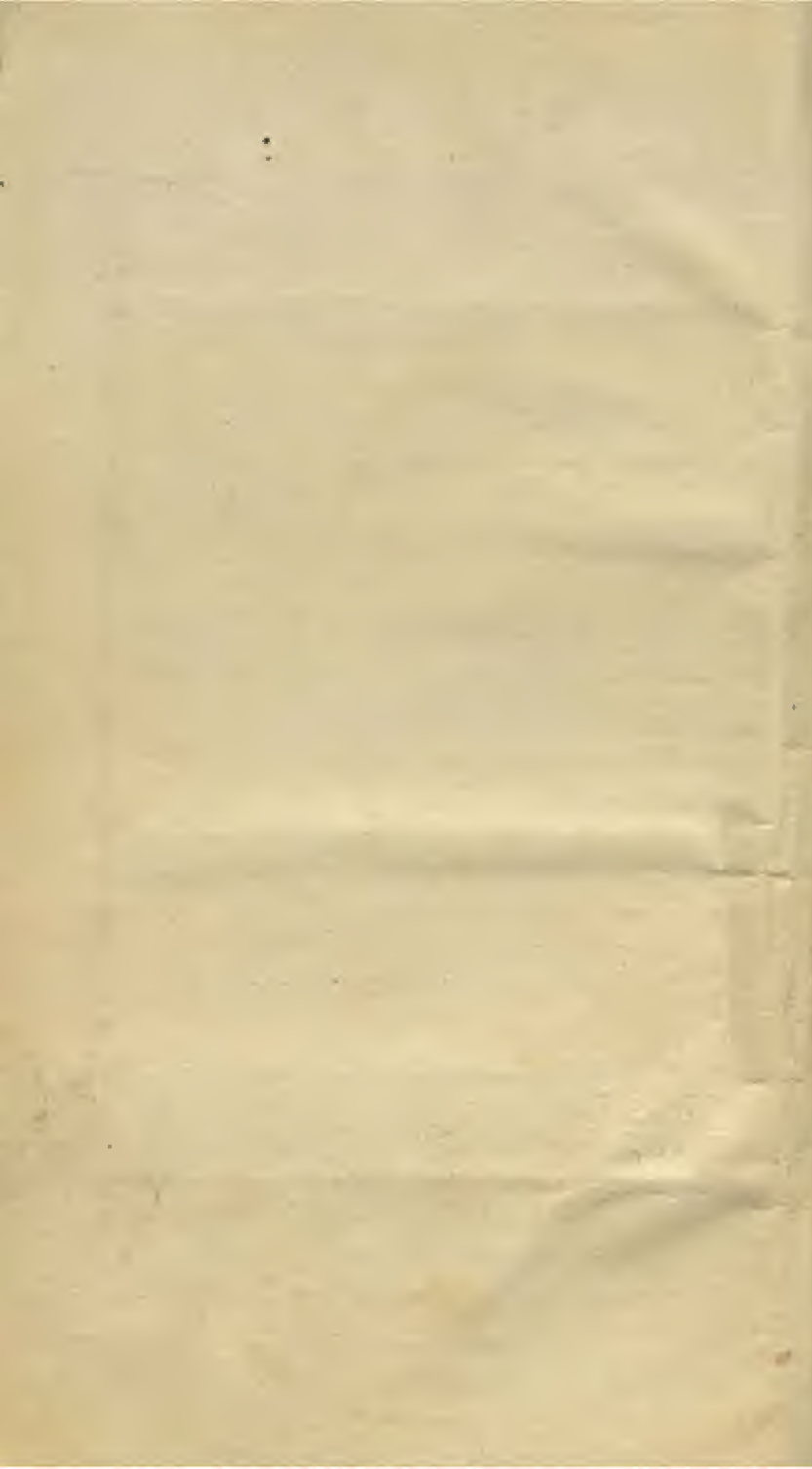
Hony. Secretary, U. P. Historical Society.

2nd Edition.

All Rights Reserved.

Rs. 3/-

PRINTED BY R. G. BANSAL & Co., 339, KASABAT BAZAR, AGRA.



CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL
LIBRARY, NEW DELHI.

Acc. No. 22881

Date. 25. 2. 56.

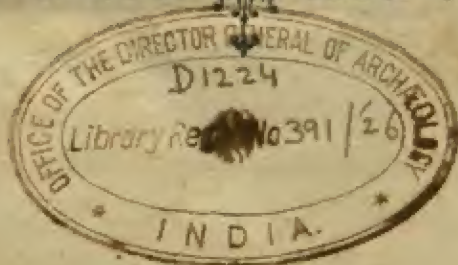
Call No. 913. 051. Mor

*Copy of a letter from Lieutenant General Sir Alfred
Gaselee G. C. I. E. K. C. B., Commanding the
forces, Eastern Command, to M. Muin-ud-din,
General Superintendent, Collectorate,
Muttra. Dated Agra, the 18th
December 1905.*

Sir,

I enclose a letter from Sir Walter
Lawrence from which you will see that
Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and
Princess of Wales have been graciously
pleased to accept copies of your work on
the Taj.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) ALFRED GASELEE.



*Copy of a letter from Sir Walter Lawrence to Lt. General
Sir Alfred Gaslee, G. C. I. E., K. C. B.*

PRINCE OF WALE'S CAMP, INDIA.

16th Decr. 1905.

My Dear General,

Will you please inform Muin-ud-din that I have handed the two copies of his work on the Taj to the Prince and Princess of Wales and that I am directed to convey the thanks of Their Royal Highnesses to him.

Yours Sincerely,
(Sd.) WALTER LAWRENCE.

Foreword.

This little book written by M. Moin-ud-din of Agra contains a mine of information invaluable alike to the student of History and to the Tourist from Europe or America. The Author has devoted himself to much research, and has availed of several contemporary Moghal Histories, such as the Badshah Namah, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Shahjahan Namah, the Ain-i-Akbari, etc. The last Edition commanded a large sale, and it is hoped, that this edition which has been carefully revised will also be accorded the warm reception which it deserves. Of the numerous cheap handbooks and guides to the Taj and the neighbouring Historic buildings of Agra, there are few so interesting and full of details as this, and as the author is a good Persian Scholar and an Enthusiast, his sole desire in writing this book has been to place in the hands of those who visit Agra, all the best particulars which are available in Persian books and other sources concerning that Fairy fabric, the Taj.

Bareilly : }
12-10-24. }

S. ABU MUHAMMAD.

DEDICATION.

WITH KIND PERMISSION THIS BOOK

IS

MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

TO

Lieutenant-General Sir Alfred Caselee,

G. C. I. E., K. C. B.,

**Commanding the Eastern Forces,
Eastern Command,**

IN TOKEN OF

GREAT INTEREST HE HAS EVINCED IN THE SUBJECT MATTER

OF

THIS HUMBLE PRODUCTION.

Preface to the Revised Edition.

The first edition of this book, which was published in 1904, was originally a translation of my Urdu work *Muin-ul-Asar*.

Happily the work was appreciated by the European and Anglo-Indian public and the interest exhibited in this country, Europe and America has encouraged me to recast the work with certain important additions which I believe will prove of further interest.

This brochure deals chiefly with one of the great wonders of the world, the perfection of the Art of (Mughal) Architecture, the world-renowned edifice which we all know by the simple and unostentatious name of "The Taj" at Agra.

The materials for this book have been collected from trustworthy resources at our disposal and I am confident they will stand the test of critical observers. The description of each building is accompanied by a short biographical notice of the person to perpetuate whose memory it was built.

The sacred texts that beautify the different parts of the Taj have been exhibited in this edition with detailed references to their English translations in Sale's *Al-Quran*. This arrangement, I trust, will satisfy the curiosity of an inquisitive Reader by helping him to elicit and decipher the different texts with as much ease as could be wished. *

I have supplemented this edition with another interesting and important appendix containing brief description of the noteworthy archaeological palaces and buildings—the Fort, the Jama Masjid, the Sikandra, the Itmad-ud-Daula, the Chini-ka-Rauza, the Aram Bagh etc. These edifices have no little importance in history and it is expected that they would serve the purposes of delicious desserts to voracious readers of the history of Mughal buildings.

AGRA:

The 22nd December 1924.)

Md. MOIN-UD-DIN,

List of Illustrations.

| | TO FACE PAGE. |
|---|------------------|
| I. Gate of the Taj | 31 |
| II. View of the Taj | 36 |
| III. The Eastern facade of the Mosque ... | 38 |
| IV. Interior of the Cenotaph Chamber ... | 45 |
| V. <i>Muhajjar</i> or the marble screen enclosing the tombs of Mumtaz Mahal & Shah Jahan | 49 |
| VI. The Jilo-Khana or the Eastern part of the quadrangle out-side the central entrance gateway | 64 |
| VII. The Taj from the marble fountain ... | 89 |
| VIII. Panoramic view of the Taj with its mosque and Jamaat Khana from the river-front ... | 121 |

PLANS.

| | |
|--|--------------|
| I. Map of Agra City and Cantt: ... | Frontispiece |
| II. Sketch plan of the Taj | 33 |
| III. Ground plan of the Mausoleum ... | 63 |
| IV. Plan of Humayun's Mosque | 111 |
| V. Plan of the Palaces (Agra Fort) ... | 133 |

CONTENTS

PAGES

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|------|
| MUMTAZ MAHAL CALLED THE TAJ MAHAL | ... | 1-14 |
|-----------------------------------|-----|------|

Mumtaz's parentage—Shah Jahan's confidence in Mumtaz—Merciful nature of Mumtaz Mahal—Charge of narrow-mindedness against Mumtaz—Mumtaz's death—Temporary repository of Mumtaz's remains—Shah Jahan's grief—Mumtaz's children.

| | | |
|---|--|-------|
| THE SITUATION OF THE MAUSOLEUM AND ITS ARTISTS. | | 14-17 |
|---|--|-------|

Site of the Taj—Early condition—Why built?—Artist of various countries and their salaries—Officers—Charge of ill-treatment of the workmen.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|-------|
| THE DESIGN OF THE TAJ | ... | ... | 18-29 |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|-------|

Views of European writers respecting the plan—Similitude between the Taj and Humayun's Sepulchre—Mosaic work of the Taj—Opinions of well-known writers—A general reply.

| | | | | |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| THE TAJ | ... | ... | ... | 30-62 |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-------|

Area and form of the Taj Mahal—The Gate of the Taj—The artificial reservoir or fountain in the garden—Former and present states of the Garden—An old tree—The temporary repository of Mumtaz's remains—The terrace of the Mausoleum—The Mosque—Bassi Tower—Elevation of Minarets—Elevation of the Raza—Comparison with the Kutab Minar at Delhi—The Maqbara (Sepulchral shrine)—The Raza (a dream in marble)—The interior and its workmanship—The burial hall—*Mukaffar* (the marble screen enclosing the tombs)—Gold railing—Grave-mound of Mumtaz Mahal—Covering of pearl strings—Shah Jahan's intention to build another mausoleum for himself—Shah Jahan's illness—His death—Arrival of Prince Muazzam—Aurangzeb visits his parents' tomb—The tomb of Shah Jahan—The Vault and original tomb—The superstructure.

| | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| THE JILO-KHANA AND OTHER APPENDAGES TO THE TAJ MAHAL | ... | ... | ... | 64-65 |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-------|

| | | | | |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| MUMTAZABAD | ... | ... | ... | 65-66 |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|

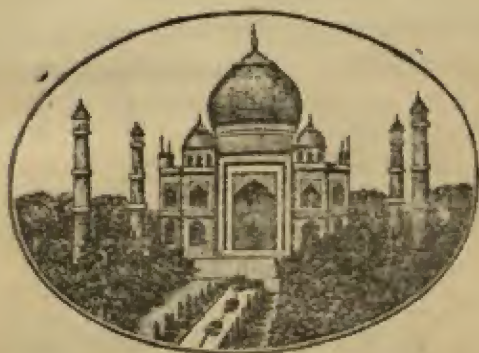
| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| THE SEPULCHRE OF SATI-UN-NISA KHANAM | ... | ... | ... | 67-72 |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| THE SEPULCHRE OF SARHINDI BEGAM | ... | ... | ... | 72-73 |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|

CONTENTS

| | PAGE. |
|---|---------|
| SEPULCHRE OUTSIDE THE TAJ MAHAL, EASTWARD ... | 73 |
| THE FATEHPURI MOSQUE | 74-75 |
| THE RESTING PLACE OF THE MAIDS-OF-HONOR ... | 75-76 |
| THE COST—The period of construction—Endowment assigned to the Taj—The first Urs (death anniversary of Mumtaz)—Peculiar charms of the Taj | 76-90 |
| BUILDINGS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF THE TAJ ... | 91-106 |
| <p>The house of Islam Khan Broomi—The shrine of Saiyad Jafar Bukhari—The garden of Khan Alam Mirza, Barkhurdar—The Sepulchre of Diwanji Begam—The dwelling of Khan Dauran Nasrutjung.</p> | |
| GARDENS AND OTHER BUILDINGS | 107-116 |
| <p>Achanak Garden—Cemetery between the Achanak Garden and the Char Bagh—The Mahtab Bagh—Humayun's mosque and an old Cemetery.</p> | |
| LIST OF CHIEF ARTISTS (APPENDIX I). | 117-118 |
| PRECIOUS STONES SENT TO SHAH JAHAN BY KINGS, NAWABS AND RAJAHS (APPENDIX II). | 119-120 |
| OPINIONS OF WELL-KNOWN AUTHORS AND WRITERS ABOUT THE TAJ (APPENDIX III) | 121-132 |
| THE FORT (APPENDIX IV). | 133-137 |
| <p>The Moti Masjid or Pearl Mosque—The <i>Darshani Darwaza</i>—The Mina Bazar—<i>Diwan-i-Am</i> (the Hall of Public Audience)—<i>Hauz-i-Jahangiri</i> (the Cistern of Jahangir)—<i>Machchhi Bhawan</i> (Fish Palace)—The <i>Nagina Masjid</i> (the Gem Mosque)—<i>Diwan-i-Khas</i> (the Hall of Select Audience)—<i>Musamman Burj</i> (Octagonal Tower)—<i>Zanana</i> apartment—<i>Khas Mahal</i>—<i>Anguri Bagh</i> (Grape Garden)—<i>Shish Mahal</i> (Palace of Mirrors)—<i>Somnath Gates</i>—<i>Jahangiri Mahal</i>—<i>Akhari Mahal</i>.</p> | |
| THE JAMA MASJID (APPENDIX IV) | 137 |
| SIKANDRA (APPENDIX IV) | 138 |
| THE TOMB OF ETMAD-UD-DAULA (APPENDIX IV) ... | 138-139 |
| CHINI-KA-KAUZA (APPENDIX IV) | 139-140 |
| ARAM BAGH AND JAHAN ARA BAGH (APPENDIX IV) ... | 140 |
| OPINIONS OF WELL-KNOWN WRITERS AND PRESSES ON THE ORIGINAL PUBLICATION | 141-146 |

THE
MAUSOLEUM OF MUMTAZ MAHAL,
CALLED
THE TAJ.



O Zephyr ! thou dost wander free
O'er globes and regions bright,
Didst thou a landscape ever see
Of charm and such delight ?

Even at so late a date as this, the world holds in profusion, numerous remains of the rare and magnificent edifices which Islam raised in her ~~the~~ palmy days and which fortunately have escaped ravages of time. They supply clear evidence of the wonderful skill of the Moslem artists of by gone days. Some of them are, indeed, marvels of architecture, the perfect and ingenious workmanship of which baffles the critical acumen of the greatest connoisseurs of modern art. The traveller meets them, mostly in ruins by the road-

side, at Agra and at Delhi; in the environs of Damascus, at Baghdad, and Isfahan; on the plains of Cairo, in Sicily, at Granada, Cordova, and Seville. They tell the story—a sad story of the grandeur, the splendour and the power of the Muhammadan potentates who erected them. Any one who having visited those scattered architectural wonders comes to see the marvellous mausoleum of Mumtaz Mahal, the Taj, would surely exclaim with the oriental poet,

از همه خویان بر حدائی یگانه بود
وز جمال خویش در عالم فسانه بود
Of Graces all doth none compare
With thee, thou fairest of the fair.

The merits which all the rest of the Moslem edifices possess individually—the flowering and painting which distinguish the Persian buildings; the remarkable purity, the style, and the design, that form the prominent features of the Egyptian mosques; the mosaics, the ornamentation, the decorations, the brilliant colouring, the polish, and the finish, which characterize the palaces and buildings of Spain—are all combined in the Taj, which may, in the literal sense of the name, be called the Crown of architecture.

To enjoy one sight of the fairy-faced Taj and to behold its surpassing beauties, European tourists come in thousands all the way to Hindustan at considerable sacrifice of their comfort and money. Agra truly owes its pre-eminent fame above other towns to this venerable

structure. But before describing the building itself, it is necessary to give a short biography of the illustrious Queen, whose earthly remains lie beneath it.

THE TAJ MAHAL.

The proper name of the princess, who rests in the vault of the mausoleum was Arjumand Bano Begam, entitled Mumtaz Mahal, a name since converted into Taj-Mahal by long usage.

The lady was of high birth. She was the grand daughter of Mirza Ghias Beg, the prime minister of Jahangir, and father of the renowned Nur Jahan Begam. Her father, Khwaja Abul Hasan, whose title was Yamin-ud-doulah Asaf Khan, was a man of intrinsic worth, and great talents. He was a man of dignified appearance, a clear head, and high aspirations. On Mirza Ghias' death, the Khwaja's personal qualifications secured him the post his father had held. Jahangir held the son in as great an estimation as he had held his father. Her mother was Diwanji Begam. Mumtaz Begam was born in 1003 A. H. (1594 A. D.). When she was old enough to learn letters, her father and grandfather took pains to educate her in every accomplishment suited to her status in life; and her unusual genius inspired them with the hope that she like her aunt, Nur Jahan, would one day rise to an exalted position and acquire a world-wide celebrity.

When Mumtaz Begam's education was finished and she had reached an age verging on womanhood, the fame

of her beauty went beyond the confines of the harem, and her accomplishments became the universal topic of conversation. Jahangir had the lady betrothed to his son Shah Jahan in 1607, A. D. and five years later in the year 1612, (Rabi-ul-awal 9th, 1021 A. H.), when she had just passed her nineteenth year, her nuptials were celebrated, the bridegroom being nearly twenty one. Jahangir conferred upon his daughter-in-law the title of Mumtaz Mahal. The wedding ceremonies were performed at the house of Etmad-ud-Daula, Mirza Ghias. The Emperor attended the wedding in person and had the pleasure of tying the bridal wreath of pearls to the bride-groom's turban with his royal hands.

Shah Jahan, it should be remarked, had already been married, (nearly two years before), to the daughter of Muzaffar Husain Mirza, the grandson of Shah Ismail Safwi, the King of Persia. This princess was called Qundhari Begam, and before the marriage of which we are speaking had born of her to Shah Jahan a daughter named Purbunar Bano Begam.

But Mumtaz Begam's beauty and wit proved so powerful that Shah Jahan's affections were soon transferred to his new bride. She became all in all to Shah Jahan, who remained constant in his love for her until his death. Following the traditional custom of his ancestors he took other wives also ; but none of them succeeded in superseding Mumtaz in his affections. She was to Shah Jahan in a manner what her aunt Nur-

Jahan had been to Jahangir. The niece and the aunt respectively captivated their royal lovers by their charms. Mumtaz was in no way inferior to Nur Jahan in mental gifts or personal beauty. They however differ in their posthumous fame. Nur Jahan is known only to those interested in political history, while the name of Mumtaz is familiar even in China and Peru. The world can hardly produce another instance of a daughter of Eve whose resting-place is the resort of pilgrims of all nations and creeds.

Shah Jahan's passionate attachment to Mumtaz made them inseparable companions both at home and abroad. She remained with her consort like his shadow all her life. She accompanied him in his campaigns. In the Deccan expedition, the sagacious lady was of great help to him. Her prudent counsels contributed materially towards the success of the campaign. He consulted her in all political affairs, and the two together carried on the administration happily till 1619. Hitherto they had enjoyed the support of Nur Jahan whose regard for her brother, Asaf Khan, was the motive for her solicitude for the well-being of her niece. As she had the greatest influence at court, the wheels of Shah Jahan's fortune rolled on smoothly; but henceforth, owing to the marriage of Nur Jahan's own daughter by Sher Afgan Khan, her former husband, to Jahangir's younger son, Shahryar, Nur Jahan became Shah Jahan's enemy. The queen, a powerful factor in the State, forsaking Shah Jahan, espoused the cause of her son-in-law. She did her

utmost to facilitate the succession of the latter to the throne, and had recourse to machinations to alienate Jahangir from Shah Jahan.

She succeeded in her designs. The fair schemer poisoned the mind of the infatuated monarch to chastise his dear innocent son. Shah Jahan did all he could to regain the love of his angry father, but in vain. His ill-wishers thwarted him. Wider grew the gulf between father and son. A strong force was sent against him under prince Parwez and Mahabat Khan. Shah Jahan left Burhanpur and looked for safety in flight. He was a refugee first at the Court of the Deccan King and at another time in Bengal. The King's displeasure lasted eight years which to the persecuted prince were years full of distress, anxiety, and unrest. No two consecutive days found him in the same place. He had apprehension of being captured any moment. The truth of "Adversity tries friends," was sadly exemplified in his case. Those who once declared they would sacrifice their very lives for him forsook him and fled. This state of existence continued till 1627, when Jahangir, who had been long suffering from Asthma, died. Shah Jahan set out immediately for the Capital, where successfully overcoming all difficulties that lay in his way, he mounted the throne with the help of Asaf Khan.

The coronation was celebrated with pomp and pageantry unprecedented in Indian chronicles. Men of letters and holy men, the nobles and the high state officials attended the ceremony and customary robes of honour

were distributed. Having done with public and private levees, Shah Jahan hurried to the Seraglio, where Mumtaz had already made brilliant preparation for the reception of her freshly appointed lord. Trayfuls of gold and gems were distributed to the expectants of bounty on such occasions. Imagination only could picture the joy of Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal on this occasion. The queen received a present of two lacs in gold and six lacs in silver, together with a *Jagir* yielding 10 lacs a year. To this rich gift was added an annual grant of fifty lacs worth of jewelry on the first commemoration of the coronation anniversary. Two years later, this annuity was increased by two lacs more.

During Shah Jahan's reign, Mumtaz Mahal took part in the administration of the kingdom.

Shah Jahan's confidence in Mumtaz.

She was consulted in all complicated matters relating to government. She

was the keeper of the royal seal, which was always an object of the greatest care among Muhammadan rulers. History tells us that the seal was entrusted only to a person of unquestionable honesty and trust; for a document once stamped with it, though it be fraudulent, commanded obedience. All the *firman*s before issue were sent to the Royal palace. There the seal was affixed to them if approved, or they were held in abeyance if they needed further consideration. This duty was afterwards, at her own request, delegated to the queen's father, Yamin-ud-Daula Asaf Khan, who discharged it faithfully for many years. Mumtaz was the medium of

all royal gifts; and of course not losing sight of the precept that "Charity should begin at home" she took good care that the choicest were bestowed upon her father. Asaf Khan was made a *Naubazari* in course of time and was presented with a *Jagir* bringing in fifty lacs of rupees a year. The good man often expressed the wish to die in the life time of his royal benefactor.

Mumtaz Mahal was tender hearted by nature. The Merciful nature of Mumtaz Mahal. helpless found in her a sympathizing listener to their supplications. Widows and orphans, the miserable and the poor, freely benefited by her bounty. Her purse furnished the indigent with the means of decently disposing of their daughters in marriage. Her maid-of-honor, Sati-un-Nisa Khanam, who lies by her side in the *Rauza*, was Her Majesty's co-adjutor in her deeds of benevolence. Her mercy rescued many from death and reinstated numbers of those suffering from the royal displeasure to their lost rank and dignity.

European Historians have sometimes charged Shah Jahan with bigotry traced to the fountain head of narrow mindedness in Mumtaz. But this is a mere creation of their imagination. Past records prove the contrary. Shah Jahan dealt with men of other religions as kindly as his father and grandfather had done before him—but he followed the tenets of his own faith more closely, whereas Jahangir and Akbar had gone beyond the bounds of liberal orthodoxy. Hindus held honourable posts in his time. Mumtaz was certainly a pious

woman, most careful of her daily prayers ; and it was, most probably, the influence of her devotional spirit that made Shah Jahan so observant of prayers and fasting. Religious zeal and bigotry are by no means one and the same thing.

In 1630 when Shah Jhan was conducting his Military operations against Khan Jahan Lodhi, with his headquarters at Burhanpur in the Deccan, Mumtaz Mahal gave birth to a daughter. Owing to some internal disorder she began to get fainting fits. Finding her case had become hopeless, she asked the princess Jahan-Ara to call the King to her from the adjoining apartment. The latter entered the room of the dying queen in the small hours, and seated himself by her bed. Hi foot-fall, though slight, made her open her eyes. They were filled with tears. She looked despairingly at her dear lord, and breathed her last wish that her dear ones and her aged parents might be properly looked after when she herself had departed from this world. She then closed her eyes in death. Alas !

“What is life ? A bubble floating
On a silent, rapid stream ;
Few, too few, its progress noting,
Till it bursts, and ends the dream.”

The poet Bebadal Khan recorded the date of her death in the hemistich :—

جاء مستاز محل جنت باد

“May Paradise be the abode of Mumtaz Mahal.”
The above gives the date 1040 A. H (1630 A. D.)

Another chronogram is غم which gives the same date in one appropriate word, meaning sorrow.

Shah Jahan took the bereavement to heart. He had only been three years or so on the throne, when his hopes and expectations received a deathblow by the premature death of his beloved queen at the age of thirty-nine. The country lamented her loss. The king put on a white dress, as a sign of mourning. The members of the Royal Family, the nobles, the courtiers, and chief officials put on mourning as well.

The remains, in accordance with the eastern custom, were deposited temporarily in the *Shah Jahan's grief.* Garden of Zenabad near the Tapti in Burhanpur. Out of her personal property valued at a karor of rupees, half went to her eldest daughter, Jahan-Ara Begam, and the rest was divided among her other children.

On Thursday, the 25th of the month of Zikad, the king went to the garden on the other *Repository of Mumtaz's remains.* side of the river, and offered the prayer, usual among Muhamadans, at the temporary repository of his dear wife, who had died so full of hopes in the prime of her life. Shah Jahan made it a rule, as long as he stayed at Burhanpur, to visit the tomb each Friday.

The bereavement affected him so much that for weeks *Shah Jahan's grief.* he lived in perfect seclusion, refusing to see even the Court Nobles, and to appear at the *Jharoka* to conduct State business. His

mind was so upset that he was often heard to say that nothing but his regard for the sacred trust of an empire and the positive command of the law to limit mourning to three days, had kept him from abdicating his throne and retiring from the world.

For two years, he totally abstained from all pleasure and amusement. The customary assemblage of the surviving rivals of Mumtaz on the Id days, and on similar occasions of festivity, reminded him of his loss. He was overwhelmed with sorrow and wept bitterly. If he ever happened to enter the room where the presence of his brilliant consort used to shed lustre, his grief was pitiable to see. Mulla Abdul-Hamid of Lahore, who has related these incidents at length, tells us that before the melancholy occurrence Shah Jahan had only a few gray hair, but after it his whole head became silver-gray in a very short time :—

His hair was gray but not with years,
Nor grew they white in a single night,
As men's would grow from sudden fears;
Ah! cankerous grief his heart did blight.

Another biographer, Mulla Muhamad Sualch, says, "The month of *Zikâd*, the month in which Mumtaz died, each year witnessed a dismal scene. The king wore white dress. The nobles were seen in mourning habit."

Shah Jahan kept the word which he had pledged to the Queen at her death-bed. Jahan Ara Begam was

most kindly treated. The house-hold was entrusted to her charge. Her mother's yearly allowance of six lacs was transferred to her with the addition of four lacs, the whole being paid half in cash and half in the shape of Jagir. Mirza Ishaq Beg, who was Mumtaz's chief Steward, served Jahan Ara as Divan or Chief Secretary ; and Sati-un-Nisa Khanam was retained in the capacity of house-keeper. She also became the custodian of the King's seal. Mumtaz was the mother of fourteen children—eight sons and six daughters—of whom seven survived her. They are specified below :—

- (1) Hur-un-Nisa Begam ; born 1613 at Agra.
Died 1616, when only an infant three years and a month old.
- (2) Jahan-Ara Begam, known as the Begam, born
✓ at Agra in 1614, when Shah Jahan was fighting with the Rana of Mewar. Died in 1681.
- (3) Muhammad Dara Shikoh, who was born at
✓ Ajmere in 1615, when Shah Jahan was on his way back from the Mewar campaign. Died in 1659.
- (4) Muhamad Shah Shuja ; born 1616 at Ajmere.
Died in 1660.
- (5) Raushan-Ara Begam ; born 1617 at Burhanpur.
Died in 1671.

- (6) Aurangzeb; born 1618. Died in 1707.
- (7) Ummed Bakhsh; born 1619 in the vicinity of Sirhind, died 1621 at Burhánpur.
- (8) Suraiyá-Báno Begam; born 1620, died 1627 when seven years old.
- (9) A son; born 1622, died a few days after, not named.
- (10) Murád Bakhsh; born 1624 at Rohtas. Died in 1661.
- (11) Lutf-Ullah; born 1626 died 1627 a year and 7 months old.
- (12) Daulat Afzá; born 1627, died the same year.
- (13) Sabia-kudsia; born 1629 and died in the same year.
- (14) Gauhar-Ará; born at Burhánpur 1630, the last of the issue, whose birth caused the queen's death.¹

Six months after Mumtaz Mahal's death, her remains were conveyed from Burhanpur to the Capital, Akbarabad, under the charge of Prince Shuja, and of Satiun-Nisa Khanam, who had been, as already mentioned, the Queen's confidante, and was, on her demise, made the palace house-keeper. The Begam and the King's physician, Wazir Khan, accompanied the escort. Throughout the journey alms in cash and food were freely distributed to the poor for the benefit of the departed soul in accordance with His Majesty's wishes.²

1. Badshah Nama of Mullah Abdul Hamid Lahori, Vol. I., pp. 384 to 393.

2. Badshah Nama of Mullah Abdul Hamid Lahori, Vol. I., pp. 402-3

On reaching its destination, the coffin was interred in the open area of the Taj garden (the exact site of which will be indicated hereafter), where it remained for six months. It was then removed to its last resting place.

The plot on which the Mausoleum stands originally belonged to Rājā Mān Singh,¹ and was, in Shah Jahan's time, in the possession of the Raja's grandson, Rājā Jai Singh.² It was exchanged for a good piece of land in the royal domains.³

It would, perhaps, be superfluous to speak of the locality of the mausoleum, since the magnificent edifice is visible from every high building in Agra.

1. Raja Man Singh was a Rajput of high family. His ancestors were Akbar's faithful courtiers and adherents, and were much esteemed by the Emperor. Man Singh was a General of the Imperial forces in several engagements and did good service. The Raja's aunt, daughter of Raja Bhura Mal, was one of Akbar's queens. His sister, Raja Bhagwan Das' daughter was married to Jahangir. The two families of opposite races were thus united by blood relationship. *Darbar-i Akbari*, p. 636.

2. Raja Jai Singh, son of Raja Maha Singh, and grandson of Partap Singh, and great grandson of Raja Man Singh, belonged to the *Kachwaha* clan. He took service under Shah Jahan, and in 1664 was appointed Governor of the conquered provinces in the Deccan by Aurangzeb. In 1666 he was called away to the court but he died on his arrival at Burhanpur, on 28th Moharram, 1078 A. H. (1667 A. D.). He was a Sanskrit Scholar and was acquainted with the Turkish, Arabic and Persian languages. He had two sons, Ram Singh and Kirat Singh, of whom the former received the title of Raja, and all the landed estate on their father's death. Many good buildings were built at Agra by Jai Singh, but they are all gone; only their locality is known by the name of Jai Singhapura.

3. *Baishah Namah* of Mullā Abdul Hamid of Lahore, Vol. I., p. 403.

A wide pathway, below the Railway bridge over the Jamna along the eastern wall of the Fort, joins the pucca road constructed during the famine of 1838. The area occupied by the road was once lined by the sumptuous houses of the nobles. They are now mere heaps of shapeless ruin. Half a mile off from the Fort, there was on the right side of the Strand road, Roomi Khan's dwelling close to the Bukhara ghat. On the left side along the river bank, houses and gardens were to be seen in an unbroken line from the Fort to the Taj. Among them was the block, a crystal palace, called Sahibji's Deorhi. A little way on, there stood Mahabat Khan's residence, beyond which lay the shrine of Saiyad Jalal Uddin Bukhari, which exists still. Near the Burning Ghat were the mansions of Raja Todar Mal, Raja Man Singh and Raja Jai Singh, now effaced for ever. Between the burning ghat and the Taj are to be seen to the present day the spacious garden and stone dwelling of Khan-i-Alam, the only remnant of that galaxy of brilliant habitations. At a short distance south from the river side, the road branches off towards the Cantonments. Here on the right hand side is situated the Fatehpuri mosque, a grand edifice of red sand-stone. Over against it rises the Dome of the Maids-of-honour. Further on eastward from the Fort, some ten furlongs off, is the mausoleum of Mumtazul-Zamani, the "Taj."

Why built?

Several reasons have been assigned for the erection of this mausoleum. Some historians are of opinion that it was raised by

Shah Jahan at the cost of so much labour and money, simply in compliance with the last wishes of his Queen. Others think that it was the result of his own imagination that Shah Jahan built a stately monument, whose beauty and durability should withstand the action of wind and weather to the end of time. Another supposition ascribes the building of the exquisite memorial to the natural taste for architecture in that monarch. There are other buildings similarly distinguished for their beauty of design and execution. But the superb excellence of the Taj is, most probably, due to the fact that it was the first of the buildings erected by Shah Jahan at the zenith of his power, and under the influence of his tender passion for Mumtaz, and at a period when the imperial coffers were full of silver and gold, and peace reigned everywhere in his dominions.

For the construction of this unrivalled specimen of
Artists of various countries and their salaries. Mughal architecture, Shah Jahan invited to his court all the eminent architects and masons, and artists in his own territories, as well as from foreign countries; such as, Persia, Arabia and Turkey. Master Isa Afandi, the designer, and Amanat Khan Shirazi, Tughra-writer, were appointed each on a monthly salary of one thousand rupees. Ismail Khan, the dome-maker, from Turkey drew Rs. 500 a month; and Muhammad Khan, the Caligrapher from Shiraz, Rs. 800 a month. Kazim Khan of Lahore was employed on Rs. 200 a month as kalas-maker. The Superintendent of the masons was

Muhammad Hanif of Akbarabad. Mohan Lal, Manohar Singh, and Mannoo Lal, mosaicists from Lahore, received each Rs. 500 per mensem. In short, the services of the most skilful men of the age in Asia were secured.

Muhammad Isa Afandi made the plans and designs.

Officers.

Out of 38 superior artists, 2 constructed plans, 5 were calligraphers, one tughra-writer, one supervisor of masons, one dome-builder, 18 inlayers, one kalas-maker, three (gultarashes) flower-sculptors; four chief masons, and one, a Moor, master of all arts. The salaries of these masters of their respective arts ranged from 200 to 1,000 rupees. The whole gang of labourers and workmen numbered about 20,000 men. Mak-rumat Khan and Mir Abdul Karim were the Inspectors-General of the several branches into which the establishment was divided. The building was completed by this extensive establishment in 20 years.

Some European writers have made disparaging remarks in connection with the building of the Taj. It is said that the employees suffered badly. They were reduced to starvation, and subjected to harsh treatment. This aspersion can hardly stand in the face of facts. The workmen and masons, &c., were highly paid in those old days. Shah Jahan's generosity has always been the theme of historians. The royal treasury was not empty. The officers who supervised the work were large-hearted. The chief workers mostly came from beyond the territorial jurisdiction of the Emperor. They had no motive to stay and suffer.

Charge of ill-treatment
of the workmen.

The preparation of the plan of the intended building was entrusted to masters of the art from distant lands. Several designs were prepared, but none met with approval till the ingenious Afandi presented his. From this a model was at once constructed in wood, and in 1630, the very year of Mumtaz Mahal's death, commenced the building of the Mausoleum.

There are various traditions as to the original designer of the plan, but they must all be passed over as unreliable. Some European historians, however, give the credit of the performance to an Italian, Geronimo Veroneo, on the strength of a statement by Father Manrique of Spain who visited Agra in 1641.¹ But the authority is questionable for several reasons :—

1. " Father Manrique in his description of the Taj, then under construction, relates the following story, told to him by father Da Castro of Lahore, who was the executor of the obscure Italian who thus claims to have designed the Taj. The architect was a Venetian, named Geronimo Veroneo, who came to India with the ships of the Portuguese, and who died at Lahore a little before my arrival. Of him a report was current that the Badshah, having sent for him and made known to him the desire he felt to build there (at Agra) a sumptuous and a grandiose monument to his defunct consort, the architect Veroneo obeyed, and in a few days produced various models of very fine architecture showing all the skill of his art : also, that, having satisfied his Majesty in this, he displeased him according to his barbarous and arrogant pride—by the modesty of his estimates; farther that, growing angry, he ordered him to spend three *lavers* and to let him know when they were spent.....The Veroneo's story contains so many of the wildest improbabilities that it is extraordinary that Anglo-Indian writers should have accepted it with so little hesitation. In the first place it is necessary to consider that in the type of adventurers who came with the ships of the Portuguese to India in the seventeenth century and entered the service of the great

First—Manrique could not have received the information direct from Veroneo who had died at Lahore on the 2nd of August 1640, before the arrival of the Monkish traveller, (24th Decr, 1640—Jany; 1641), while the building was still in progress.

Secondly—Father Manrique's account is entirely uncorroborated by any other contemporary European writes.—

It is astonishing that Peter Munday, who was personally known to Veroneo and saw him several times at Agra, while the Taj was in course of construction, said nothing of his taking any part in the building.

Moghal, one would not expect to find the transcendent artistic genius such as the designer of the Taj possessed."

"The Indian records relating to the Taj are unusually precise and detailed in the information they give with regard to the architects and workmen. The artistic history of the period and the style of workmanship of the Taj, all testify in a remarkable way to their accuracy and the falseness of theory that Europeans directed the designs of the building." (*Vide* "The Taj and its Designers" by Mr. E. B. Havell, Principal of Govt School of Art, Calcutta, published in June number of the *1914 Century and After*, 1903). Veroneo's statement about the permission of spending the enormous amount of three *lacs* is suspicious. Had he been so trusty and favorite with the king as to have the disbursing authority of such an enormous sum entrusted to him, he could not have remained so obscure. His fame should have spread through Asia and Europe, and Bernier, Tavernier and Thevenot should have mentioned him in their histories. Badshah Namah tells us that the *Ramra* was built under the supervision of Mir Abdul Karim and Makramat Khan. Veroneo is nowhere mentioned in it. It is also noticeable why Shah Jahan who had a perfect taste for architecture, and who had hundreds of good Asiatic architects by him, should have asked a European to prepare the plan of a building thoroughly eastern in character.

Peter Munday received a visit from 'Jeronimo Veroneo' at the English house Agra between January 3rd and 6th of 1630/31.¹ He mentions him again as a Venetian and a goldsmith in Shah Jahan's pay, together with others, in 1632-33.²

Veroneo accompanied Peter Munday some way on the road to Fatehpur Sikri.

Peter Munday writes:—

"The 25 of February 1632 (1633). Wee sett out from Agra in the morninge, accompanied with Mr. John Robinson, Signior Jeronimo (Veroneo), an Italian, Signior Tristen and Signior Martin, Dutchmen, and having sett a while by a Tanck a mile without the Cittie, the accustomed place of partinge, wee tooke our leaves of each other, they returninge to Agra, I on my journey. That evening wee came to Fattapore [Fatehpur Sikri], (12 course)."³

Sir R. C. Temple, in the Introduction of Peter Munday's Travels, rightly said:—

"Relation XV deals principally with Agra and its neighbourhood. The city in Munday's time was 'Very populous by reason of the great Mogalls keeping of his court heere,' and contained a considerable number of Europeans. Among these was Jeronimo Veroneo, 'a venetian and a Goldsmith,' for whom Manrique claims the honor of designing the great Mausoleum known as the Taj Mahal.

"It is noteworthy, however, that though this building, (the Taj), was in course of construction while

1. Travels of Peter Munday, Vol. II, p. 65.

2. Ibid, p. 208. 3. Ibid, p. 225.

Munday was in residence at Agra and though Veroneo was personally known to him, yet he says nothing of the Italian's connection with the work. Had Veroneo really been the architect, it is unlikely that so accurate a chronicler as Munday would have failed to mention the fact. He saw the work going on 'with excessive labour and cost and prosecuted with extraordinary diligence.' The solid gold rail around the tomb (afterwards replaced by a network of marble) was already complete by 1632, and Shah Jahan had founded a suburb to provide a revenue for the upkeep of the Mausoleum and had caused 'hills to be made level' because they might not hinder the prospect of it' (p.213). These details are of special interest, as we have no other account of the Taj by an English traveller at this date"¹

Thirdly—No Asiatic writer has made the slightest allusion to an Italian having co-operated in the preparation of the plan or being the sole designer of it.

Fourthly.—The Badshah-Nama (the History of Shah Jahan's reign) contains the following remark :—

"It may be observed that bands of sculptors, lapidaries, inlayers and fresco-makers, came from different quarters of His Majesty's dominions. The experts of each art together with their assistants

1. Introduction on the Travels of Peter Munday, p. LVI, Vol. II.

busied themselves of the task."¹ These words evidently show that the artists and artisans were Asiatics. The omission of any reference to a European mechanic being among them is clear proof that he never took part in the construction of the edifice.

Fifthly.—Besides Bernier² and Tavernier, another French Historian, Thevenot, who visited the Taj in 1666 A. D., declares, "This superb monument is sufficient to show that the Indians are not ignorant of architecture; and though the style may appear curious to Europeans, it is in good taste, and though it is different from Greek or other ancient art, one can only say that it is very fine."

Sixthly.—The style, the plan and the form of the mausoleum are entirely Saracenic and Eastern. Its architecture and design are not inconsistent with the style of the Saracens nor beyond the reach of Indian craft.

(1) *Badshah Namah* of Mulla Abdul Hamid Lahori, Vol. II., p. 323.

(2) Bernier in his description of the Taj expressly implies that he looked upon the Taj as a purely Indian conception, for he naively confesses that though he thought that the extraordinary fabric could not be sufficiently admired, he would have ventured to express his opinion if it had not been shared in by his companion (Tavernier), for he feared that his taste might have been corrupted by his long residence in the Indies, and it was quite a relief to his mind to hear Tavernier say that he had seen nothing in Europe so bold and majestic.

A comparison of Humayun's tomb at Delhi with Muntaz's Rauza, would at once enable any open-minded critic to see that the latter is but an improvement on the former. The ingenious Afandi¹ gave the Delhi model a new form by the finishing touches of his chisel. Moreover, granting the existence of Veroneo in the service of Shah Jahan it can, by no means, lead us to the conclusion that the plan was prepared by him. He may possibly have been a member of the enormous establishment employed in executing the work. Little is known of Veroneo as an Engineer. On the other hand, he is generally told as a goldsmith or a jeweller.

Peter Munday calls him a "Venetian and a goldsmith"²

W. Foster mentions him in 1637 as "an Italian jeweller."³

In a MS. letter of Francis Corsi S. J. reviewing events that had occurred between the end of 1627 and the 13th of June 1628, Jeronimo Veroneo has been said as "*que tembellas maos e boas habilidades pa-fazer pezas curiosas de oro esmal-tadas compedraria*" (who has fine hands and great skill for making curious pieces in gold set with precious stones).⁴

The above statements clearly show that Geronimo Veroneo was a goldsmith. None of his contemporaries mentions him an Engineer, designer, plan-maker or an architect.

1. Isa Muhammad Afandi was a Turko-Indian. Plan-makers in Agra are mostly his descendants.

2. Peter Munday's travel's Vol. II, p. 208.

3. The English Factories in India (1637-41), p. 13.

4. Journal of the U. P. Historical Society, Vol. I, Part II, June 1911, pp. 133-134.

It is unreasonable to suppose that the talents of a goldsmith were equal to devising a plan which surpassed that of other distinguished buildings in this as well as in his own country, of which the rulers were remarkable for their love of architecture.

With respect to the plan the Taj will boldly challenge comparison with the finest buildings in Italy.

I quote below the opinion of a well known historian on the subject :—

“ It was one of those intervals in history when the whole genius of a people is concentrated on great architectural works and art becomes an epitome of the age. For the Taj was not a creation of a single master-mind, but the consummation of a great art epoch. Since the time of Akber the best architects, artists and art workmen of India, Persia, Arabia and Central Asia had been attracted to the Mughal Court. All the resources of a great empire were at their disposal for Shah Jahan desired that this monument of his grief should be one of the wonders of the world..... It is even believed that one Geronimo Veroneo, an Italian, who was then in Moghal service, submitted designs for Shah Jahan's inspection, a fact which has led many writers into the error of supposing that the Taj as completed was actually designed by him. The design eventually accepted was by *Ustad Isa* who is stated in one account to have been a Byzantine Turk and in another a native of *Shiraz* in Persia.”¹

1. Hand-book to Agra and the Taj &c. by E. B. Havell Esquire, A. R. C. A. Principal, School of Art, Calcutta, pp. 72-74.

Another writer Mr. J. F. Fanthome says :—

“I quite agree with you, there is no foundation whatever for the allegation that a Venetian or a Frenchman had a hand in the designing or the construction of the Taj. This is a pure fabrication of the European's brain.....I myself combated this view when revising the Gazetteer of Agra some three years ago.” These being the facts, the supposition that a Venetian devised the plan of the edifice which came to be reckoned among the wonders of the world, is absurd.

There are others who believe that the mosaic work of the Taj was executed by a French artist, named, Austen-de-Bordeaux. This surmise is as unfounded as the other about Veroneo, and should be rejected on similar grounds.

It may be observed as well that centuries before the erection of the Taj the mosaic art was invented and brought to perfection in the Islamic world. The evidence furnished by the records of Islamic architecture sufficiently proves that France was unacquainted even with the name of the art, at a period when it flourished in Persia, Egypt, Syria, Bagdad, Damascus, Sicily and Spain and was being very nicely executed in the palaces and mosques in those places and countries. The Mosque of Omar in Syria, the great Mosque at Damascus, the red palace (Alhambra), the Al-Cazar in Spain and the great mosque at Cordova, are conspicuous instances of the existence of the art so early among the

Muhammadans. 'The Mosque of Omar,' says a French historian, 'exhibits an admirable assemblage of brilliant painting, curious ornamentation and mosaics. The interior is beautifully decorated. The walls are covered with enamelled tiles, mosaics of coloured stones, golden margins, the queen's metal fresco, and pieces of stones set in with nicety. The Damascus Mosque had its walls overlaid with excellent white marble inside; and the outside including the dome was ornamented with mosaics. The ceiling is made of gilt boards to which are hung six hundred gold lamps, the places of the worshippers are overlaid with precious stones set in ornamental figures.' The mosaics form the chief feature of the Moorish structures in Spain—a fact amply supported by history. The following extract from the excellent work of the famous French antiquarian, Dr. Le Ban, (a translation of which has been published by the learned Maulvi Saiyad Ali, Shams-ul Ulama, of Bilgram under the title of *Tamad-dun i-Arab*), will be found an interesting addition to the foregone observations.

"There were two kinds of decorations current in early times among the Arabs, *mosaic* and *fresco*. The former was used for pavements as well as walls, and consisted in inlaying pieces of white marble and enamelled bricks. The latter was executed only on walls, especially on the spans of arches. I saw them in Greece, Turkey, Syria, and Egypt. Their specimens found in the eastern churches of Athens, in the Sofia at Constantinople, and in the mosque of Omar at Jerusalem,

show a uniformity pervading them all."

1. Dr. A. Führer, Ph. D., expresses his opinion that "this building (the Taj) is an exquisite example of that system of inlaying with precious stones which became the great characteristic of the style of the Moghals after the death of Akbar."¹

2. Dr. W. W. Hunter says that "the Taj represents the most highly elaborated stage of ornamentation reached by the Indo-Muhammadian builders—the stage at which the architect ends and the jeweller begins".²

3. "The judgment, indeed, with which this style of ornament is apportioned to the various parts, is almost as remarkable as the ornament itself, and conveys a high idea of the taste and skill of the Indian architect of that age."³

4. Mr. Havell writes as follows :—

"Austin de Bordeaux, a French goldsmith, who was employed in making the celebrated Peacock throne, may possibly have executed some of this metal work in the Taj, but there is no evidence worthy of consideration to support the common Anglo-Indian belief that he designed or superintended the *pietra dura* or inlaid marble

1. *Monumental Antiquities and Inscriptions N. W. P. & Oudh*, Vol. II, p. 63.

2. *Imperial Gazetteer of India* by W. W. Hunter, C. S. I., C. I. E., L. L. D. Director-General of Statistics to the Government of India, p. 74.

3. *History of Architecture* by J. Fergusson, F. R. S., M. R. A. S., p. 599, Vol: III.

decoration of the building which is entirely of the Persian School.”¹

It is thus clearly proved that no Frenchman had any hand in the execution of the mosaic work of the Taj Mahal. The whole was undoubtedly the conception of the Muhammadans. It has been shown that natives of distant places—Persia, Arabia, Egypt and Turkey, Damascus and Baghdad—came to Hindustan in the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir, and entered the imperial service. They perfected at Agra the architectural art of the old Saracens, that had already been developed in Syria, Egypt, Spain, and Persia; but had waned with the decline of Islam. Nor was India void of men thoroughly acquainted with mosaic and inlaid marble decoration. To attribute, then, the execution of the mosaic work at the Taj to Austin de Bordeaux is quite unfair and unjust.

We have a tangible proof in our favour near at hand in the buildings of Sikandra and Itmad-ud-daula, as well as in the grand mosque of Fatehpur Sikri, which were built before the Taj and before the arrival of Austin in India. It would naturally be expected that Bernier, the French philosopher and traveller, and Tavernier, the French Jewel Merchant, both of whom were at Agra in the time of Shah Jahan, would have felt proud to speak of their country-man's artistical accomplishments in their Journals. But no such mention is anywhere to be found in the accounts of the Taj given by them.

1. *See Mr. Havell's *Handbook to Agra and the Taj* p. 75.

The grand mosque of Fatehpur Sikri, Sikandra and Itmad-ud daula were built upon the principles of geometrical precision, while the distinguishing feature of the Taj Mahal is its ornamentation. These buildings, however, are not lacking in mosaic work, and this shows us plainly that it was practised in Agra before the Taj was built.

I conclude my observations with a quotation from The opinion of European antiquarian. an article published in the Journal of Indian Art, by Sir George Birdwood, an unquestioned authority on the subject. It will, it is hoped, convince the reader that the art of mosaic is of Asian and Mongolian origin, traceable to the times of the Assyrians and Solomon.

Birdwood says, "Mosaic is of Eastern origin, and never really flourished in the west, except under the fostering rule of the Sarracens. After the overthrow of the Western, Roman and Persian empires, by which the continuity of civilization in Interior Asia and Europe was interrupted, its practice was really revived in the Levant by the Byzantine Greeks and being carried through Syria and Persia into India, the newly quickened art there assumed the modified form of which the decoration of the Taj affords the most remarkable illustration. The mosaic work of the Taj is therefore not an exotic art but of indigenous development and strongly racial of the soil from which it immediately sprung. It is not in the least Florentine in character, but strictly Indian of the *mo (n) gol* period, and the product not of

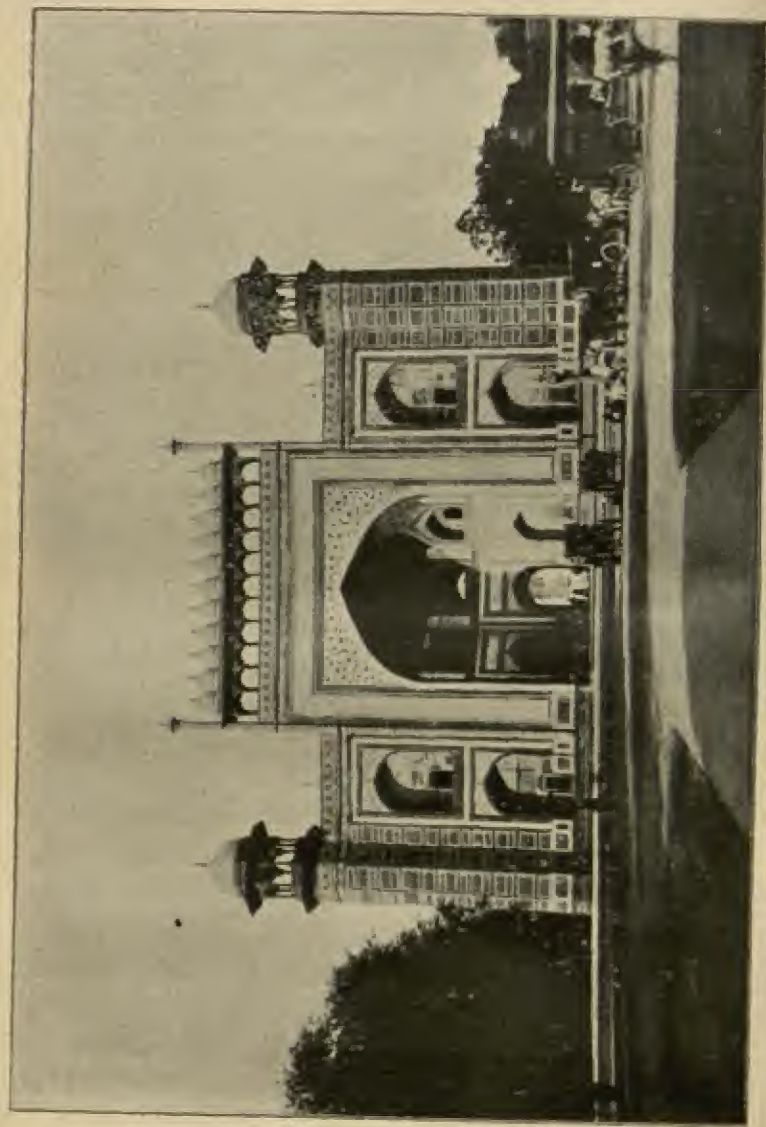
the knowledge and taste of any foreign artists in the employment of Shah Jahan, but of the whole history of India and the east, under the successive dominations of the Assyrians, Babylonians and Persians, the Greeks and Romans, and the Arabs, Turks and Mongols.”*

We now conclude our preamble, and come to the description of the edifice itself. In front of the magnificent gate there is a spacious platform, 211½ feet in length, and 86½ feet in width to the foot of the wall. A straight line drawn from the middle point of the first step to the sill of the gate, measures 64 feet. The plot encompassed by the four walls is a rectangle 1860 feet long north and south, and 1000 feet broad east and west, with a total area of 2,07,000 square yards or a little more than 42 acres. The gate rises to a height of 100 feet. The text of the whole chapter of “*walfajr*”¹ (*the day-break*) in the Koran is inscribed along the front and the sides in big letters of black stone set in marble with extreme elegance. The surface is so smooth and polished that they look as if the chisel had not touched them but that they were cast in a mould.

The merit for the execution of this artistic work belongs chiefly to Amanat Khan, whose magical chisel has wrought a talisman that puzzles the beholder. Their height from the ground produces no diminution in the

*The Decorations of the Taj at Agra published in the *Journal of Indian Art*, October 1885, No. 8, pages 61, 62, by Sir George Birdwood.

1. Ch ; 89, p. 445, Sale's Translation of the Koran.



(1) GATE OF THE TAJ. دروازه تاج محل

size of the letters. They do not look any bigger at the bottom than they are at the top, 80 feet high. The calligrapher was surely a perfect master of practical optics.

The entrance is $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. The gate is made of an alloy composed of eight different metals, and is studded with brass nails hammered in. The area inside is an irregular octagon with a diagonal $41\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The four smaller sides have each a staircase leading up to the story above. The four larger ones contain on either hand a fenced recess with a room abutting on it. The whole entrance is a masonry dome, the inside of which is red with an intricate net like painting in white—a sort of fresco. Elsewhere in the Taj the same kind of ornamental work is done in mosaic, and the materials used are marble and precious stones. The pieces are so skillfully cemented that time has failed to affect their cohesion.

Upstairs are the mazes which puzzle one to trace. A flight of 17 steps takes us to the second story. But here there is nothing deserving of special notice.

Going up 17 steps higher, we reach the third story containing four apartments. The eastern and western ones have three door-ways, and the northern and southern one each. The apartments communicate with one another by a gallery running through. At the corners of this story there are octagonal rooms, each with four door-ways, and one entrance to the staircase going up.

Of the four staircases two go down to the first floor;

the other two are closed in the middle. Want of acquaintance with this occasions the puzzle, and the visitor keeps going up and down and from one room to another without finding a clue to the starting place. It will be useful to know that the rooms at the south-western corner have a through passage, while in the north-eastern rooms the stairs are interrupted midway. A gallery affords communication between the different rooms; each passage has a branch leading to the staircase.

A flight of stairs consisting of 34 steps brings us to the very top. Here there are four towers at the corners, each containing 8 door-ways. The towers are crowned with cupolas topped with brass *kalases* still dazzling the eye with their brightness. Originally all of them had a coating of gold. But the Jats despoiled them of it during their sway. The centre of the roof is occupied by a sixteen-sided terrace. The northern and southern parapets are decked each with two bouquets at the angular points, with eleven turrets set up in the intervening space. Each turret has two arched windows of large size. The bouquets are made of red stone ornamented with mosaic of a wavy pattern in black stone and marble. The turrets are capped with bright pinnacles. The top roof has thus four bouquets, 22 turrets and 4 towers. It is spacious, airy, and pleasant. It commands a view of the whole town. Proceeding to the inner gate, we are again struck with the marvellous performance of Amanat Khan Shirazi. The sides of the gate are sanctified by the text "*Wad-duha*" (The

Brightness)¹ on the right, and "*Wat-tin*" (The Fig)² on the left and the front with "*Alam-nashrah*" (Have we not opened)³ ending in "Finished with the help of the Most High, 1057 Hijri," corresponding with 1647 A. D. We are now in the garden. On either side of the inner gate, along the wall, there are series of halls, each having 29 arched door-ways. They each measure 360 by 29½ feet. Both the rows have three storied towers at the ends. Two canals, 16½ feet wide, run along in the middle of the garden straight to the foot of the terrace of the mausoleum. To the mind of a Muhammadan they bring before him the image of those flowing in Paradise. These springs are full to the brim with crystal water. Many a fountain plays in them. They have since been impaired. Fifty years ago they were in an excellent condition, the jets rising as high as the tall cypresses standing by them. The canals have on either side stone footpaths, from which shoot laterally three walks at short intervals, with parterres intervening.

The distance between the platform before the gate and the terrace of the artificial reservoir is 412½ feet. The portion of the aqueduct along this distance has 25 jets d'eau, the first being the largest. The reservoir with its wide margin and steps is made of marble. Its central position in the

The artificial reservoir or fountain in the garden.

1. Chapter, 93, p. 448, [Sale.]

2. " 95, p. 449. "

3. " 94, p. 449. "

garden is charming. Fishes of different colours swim merrily in the clear water filled to the edges. Its silvery margin is encircled with handsome chairs. The fountain and its terraced bank are square in form, one side of the former measuring $43\frac{1}{4}$ feet, and of the latter $74\frac{1}{2}$ feet. There are four small jets d'eau at the corners, and one in the centre. The group affords a most pleasant sight when at play.

The reservoir has to its right and left two gay edifices, three stories high abutting upon the rampart. The platform in front of the eastern building is $125\frac{1}{4} \times 48\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The building itself is $73\frac{3}{4}$ feet long and $37\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. It is crowned with a red stone tower, marble topped. The western is an exact copy of the eastern. At the foot of the staircase to the former in a recess of the garden repose the ashes of a holy man.

The distance, from the platform of the inner gate to the ornamented basin in the centre of the garden, has already been given. A straight line joining the basin to the red stone terrace of the mausoleum would measure $438\frac{3}{4}$ feet. The section of the canal in this part contains 25 small jets with a large one at the end. The entire distance, from the extremity of the outer platform of the portal to the terrace of the principal building, is $438\frac{3}{4} + 74\frac{1}{2} + 412\frac{1}{2} = 925\frac{3}{4}$ feet.

Judging from the fashion in vogue in Asia the Taj

Former and present
states of the Garden.

Garden was without a rival. It had plants of rare excellence. Delicious

fruits and fragrant flowers delighted the senses. On either bank of the aqueduct stood tall cypresses like grenadiers watching over the fairy prospect around. A fountain played before each to drive away the tedium of monotony. *Bela*, *Jessamine*, *Motia*, *Champa*, *Harsinghar*, *Jooi*, *Ketki*, *Maulsiri*, *Keora*, *Rose*, *Marigold*, *Daudi*, *Gul-i-abbas*, *Gulmehdi*, *Názboo*, *Gul-i-farang*, *Gul-i-chandni*, *Gulshabbao*, *Seoti*, *Gul-i-râna*, *Suraj-Mukhi*, (sun-flower), *Sumbul*, *Sausan*, *Nargis*, loaded the breezes with their aromatic odours. The rosy light of the morning, the evening shade, the refreshing dew, the flowers in bloom perfuming the air, the cuckoo's cheerful notes, the fitful glimmer of the fireflies, the merry dance of the fish in the marble basin, the melodies of sweet warblers in the smiling green, these were the enchantments of a scene, which needed the graphic pen of a Ruskin to depict in all its vividness and reality.

The garden produced a variety of fruit excelling those of Kabul in sweetness : grape, pomegranate, plantain, apple, pear, lemon, orange, quinee, pineapple, mango, blackberry, guava, *khirmi*, *falsa*, mulberry, fig, peach, walnut and others. But the tall spreading trees and the cypresses are now no more. They were cut down because, it is so stated, they obstructed the view of the tomb from the Entrance. They have been replaced by smaller plants and ornamental grass plots.

Of the old trees very few are left. The oldest is the one near the Eastern wall. It is

An old tree.

425 years old. Gardeners call it

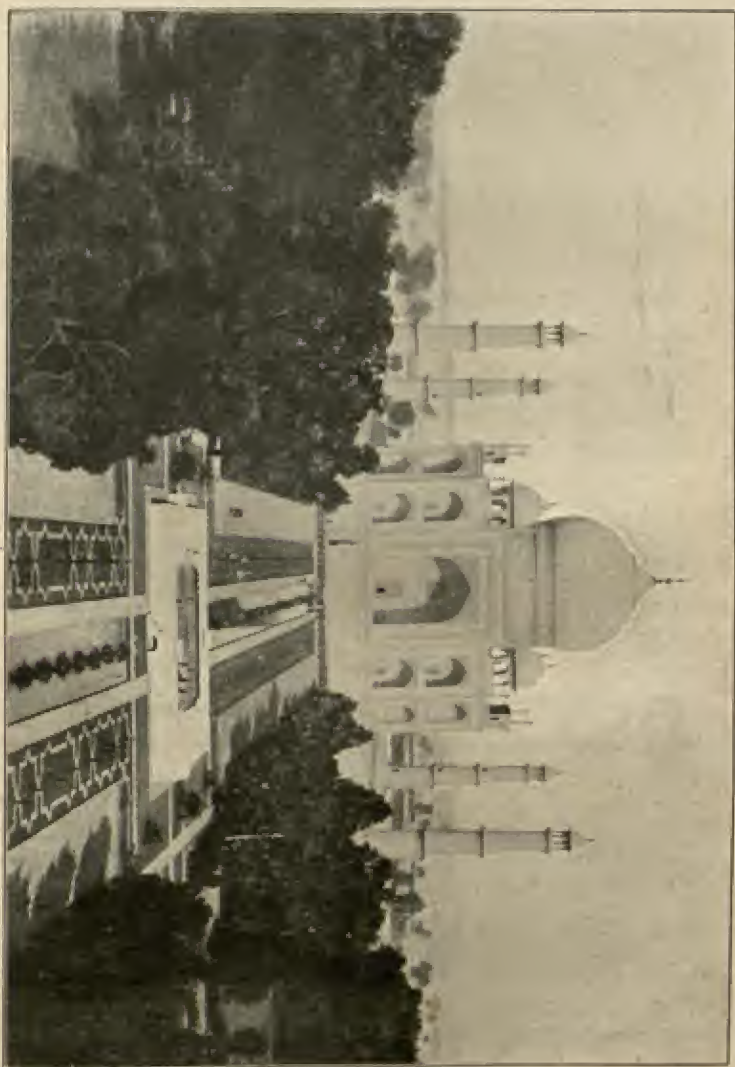
"the cotton tree," (*Senbhal*). The part of the huge trunk at the root above the ground is $48\frac{3}{4}$ feet in circumference. It is twice as old as the building within which it stands.

Now proceeding further on we halt at a spot, which has but casually, been mentioned before. This spot was the second repository of Mumtaz's remains, after they were exhumed and brought over from Burhanpur. It is a small roofless enclosure near the Western wall, below the large well of the mosque. An evergreen creeper over-shadows it. It measures $19 \times 16 \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ feet.

The first terrace of the mausoleum is made of red stone extending to the rampart east and west. The Jumna and the garden form its northern and southern boundaries. It is 970 feet, 7 inches east and west. The balustrade on the river-side is 364 feet, 10 inches distant from that on the garden side. It is $970\frac{7}{12} \times 364\frac{5}{6}$ feet. This terrace rises 4 feet from the garden ground level and is $28\frac{1}{4}$ feet high from the margin of the river which flows past the northern wall. In the midst of the red stone terrace is the marble one elevated 20 feet; on which stands the mausoleum itself. Southwards it has two sets of stairs in a line at a short distance from each other. Each flight consists of 21 steps entirely of marble. The marble terrace is a square whose side is 328 feet, 3 inches. The eastern side contains a set of three rooms in the middle, each of which is $69 \times 19\frac{1}{2}$ feet. One room communicates

The temporary repository of Mumtaz's remains.

The terrace of the Mausoleum.



(2) VIEW OF THE TAJ. - روضہ تاج محل (۲)

4/8
10/10/1

with the other. The middle room has a window and three screens of network chiselled in marble. The northern and the western sides also have exactly similar rooms. Each side of the marble terrace has arches with the striking feature that each of them has been built of five pieces only, all equal in size.

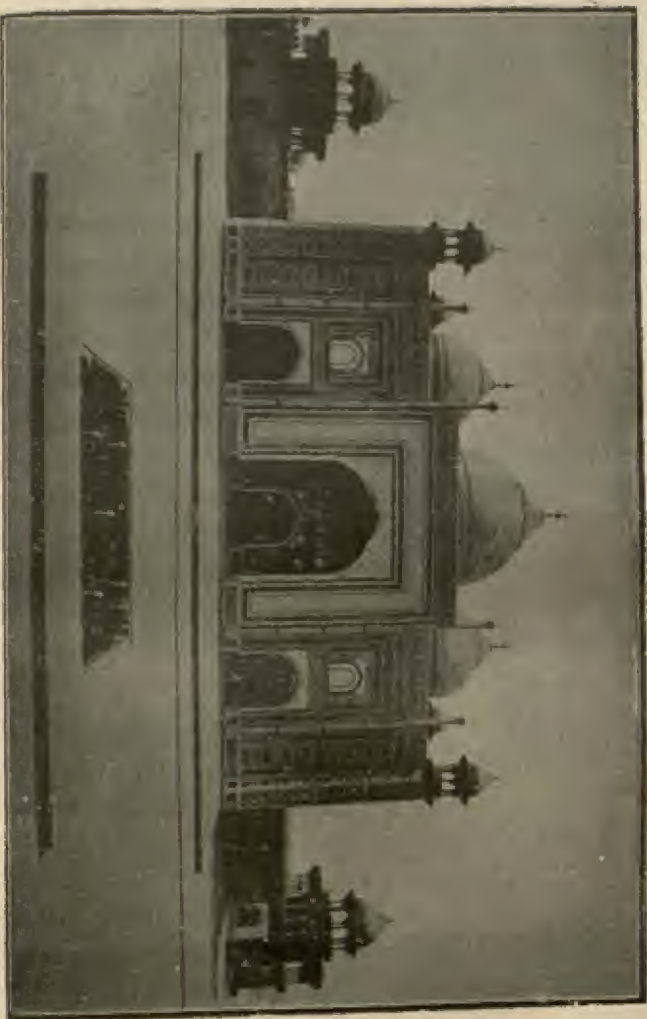
This edifice is surrounded by a chequered platform, 19 feet, 5 inches square, as a continuation of the red stone one. Each figure consists of a lozenge of marble slabs with an octopetalous flower of red stone inserted in the empty space. At the extremities of the margin of this Arabesque that overlooks the Jumna, are two staircases, one towards the mosque, and the other towards the cloister. At the foot of the former begins a row of fourteen rooms in which perpetual darkness prevails. A strong light only can reveal these beautiful caverns. The rooms to the left hand side are here and there adorned with frescoes. An arcade runs along as a veranda to the right of which is a masonry wall. The last two rooms have apertures peeping on to the placid stream which runs at the foot of the shrine. It was these openings that brought to light the existence of these long-hidden chambers. The mouths of the staircases were shut up with stone slabs. It is hard to find out why these underground chambers were built. Darkness unfits them for human habitation. They are so close and gloomy that nothing short of the contrivances that are used to ventilate and illumine the coal mines of these times, could enable any one to live in them even

temporarily. From the existence of sand, apparently of the Jumna, lying thickly on the floor it might be reasonably supposed that there was a ghat or landing place on the spot, which however was disused subsequently for some reason unknown. The real object of building them remains a mystery.

To the West of these chambers is situated the mosque with the cloisters, having paved yards or platforms 16 feet square in front of them. The platform of the mosque is of red stone, 186 by $51\frac{3}{4}$ in size. It has 3 arches. The middle one $37\frac{1}{4}$ feet, and those on either side, $18\frac{3}{4}$ feet wide. The building measures 79 feet from the inner limits of the platform to the back of the arched recess close to the pulpit. It is 186 feet in length. The dimensions of the pulpit are $5\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ feet. On the arched recess is inscribed the text of "*Wash-Shams*," (The Sun).¹ In the centre is an inlaid slab of polished marble, which reflects the mausoleum. There are two fenced cloisters on the right of the mosque. The floor is paved with brilliant stone that looks like shining red silken velvet. It has room for a congregation of 539 souls. The seats are marked out by pieces of black stone inserted in the shape of arches in the pavement. In the middle portion of the building on the back wall "*Sura Ikhlās*," (the declaration of God's unity),² is inscribed in *Tughra* in a circular form. Outside these are two circles containing the words "*Ya Kafi*" eight

1. Chapter 91, p. 449, (Sale).

2. Chapter 112, p. 459, (Sale).



No 7.

The Eastern facade of the mosque.



times with the word "*Allah*" between each pair. On either side of the smaller arches appears the first formula of the faith (*La Ilaha, &c.*) in several rings. Inside the mosque on the first door towards the north there are two circles with the same formula in *Tughra* character. The first and the third arches contain eight rings apiece. Each of them has "*Ya Kafi*" followed by "*Allah*," eight times. On the other side of each arch similar inscriptions of "*Ya Kafi, &c.*," occur in *Tughra* rings. There are four small rings with the *Kalima* inscribed like the rest. These *Tughra* haloes were golden but their lustre is gone.

To the left of the mosque, southwards near the large well, there is a staircase adjoining the last arch. A flight of 80 steps carries us to the top of the roof. The pinnacle of the forehead of the mosque is 78 feet and 5 inches high from the level of the platform. At the four corners rise octagonal towers, the uppermost gallery of which is 13 feet from the roof. There are three beautiful domes on a terrace elevated $7\frac{3}{4}$ feet. The middle dome, the largest of course, has 16 divisions of $12\frac{1}{4}$ feet each. The circuit of the dome is $164\frac{1}{2}$ feet. One side of the other two domes measures $18\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and the measure round is 115 feet.

Adjacent to the back wall of the mosque there are on both sides halls with their stairs abutting upon the northern and the southern walls of the mosque and the rampart. Those on the north side take up to the *Bassai Tower*, which is as

Bassai Tower.

remarkable as the mausoleum itself. Tradition accounts for the name in the following manner: "A collection of houses going by the name of *Bassai* formerly stood in the ground now occupied by the tower. Shah Jahan asked the owners to let him have them on payment of the price. They, however, offered them to him gratis on condition that one of the several structures of the Taj, should be called after their little settlement. The king gladly accepted the offer. The request was complied with and the tower stands to this day bearing the name of its site." The height of the tower from its red-stone terrace is 42 feet. This tower has two companions, a hall and another tower to the south of the mosque; with a large deep well, provided with a flight of stairs which go down to the edge of the water. On the north of the mosque a staircase descends from the tower to the river. The Basai tower, it may be noticed, has on either hand other structures corresponding. As the Rauza has a mosque on its west, so it has a Prayer-hall of similar construction at the opposite end. Whatever is to be seen in the mosque has been repeated in the hall, excepting that the latter has no *seats of prayer*, no pulpit, no *Tughra* decorations, and no ornamental rings or inscriptions. Otherwise it possesses all the artistic beauties of the mosque, and even excells its rival in the splendour of its floral ornamentation on the walls and the underpart of the roof which is executed in white on red ground.

The figure of the *Kalas* is exactly copied in black

stone inserted in the surface of the platform of the cloister on its northern side. A measurement of this representation would give the real size of what looks so small when seen from below. The whole *Kalas* is $30\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The right base of the crown is $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet, the diameter of the globe $4\frac{1}{2}$, the neck $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet, the globe over it $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The arc of the crown is $9\frac{2}{3}$ feet and the chord 5 feet.

Our visitor has been to the red stone terrace round the marble structure. Now before going up he must not pass unnoticed the occasional surface perforations which are meant to drain off the rain. The place which he has now entered is sacred. Shah Jahan and his consort repose here. Show your respect for the dead and tread gently, lest your footfall disturb the slumberers.

Here there are two sets of stairs each 22 in number, ascending to where the stately mausoleum stands in all its glory. The beholder is filled with wonder and admiration at the sight of this ideal sublimity and beauty never pictured by him in his dreams. It is, so to speak, a visible embodiment of what may have been related in myths or legends. The eye is delighted with its soft beauty and the soul is charmed with its exquisite workmanship, which seems as if wrought by the hand of angles.

The eye is loth to withdraw from it, so attractive is the sight. From top to bottom, within and without, and around, it is uniformly superb, fascinating to both the knowing and the ignorant. The style, the form,

the materials, and the artistic refinements of the building, beggar description. A variety of sciences, Geometry, Trigonometry, Mechanics, Mensuration, Painting Sculpture, and many others are laid under contribution to complete this architectural model of art.

The dimensions of the marble terrace and the spacious rooms with which it is flanked have been described previously with minuteness, as they have also an intimate connection with the lower terrace. We now proceed to review the superstructure. Lofty minarets stand at its four corners. The north-west one has the garden on one side of it and the prayer-cloister on the other. Its base is eight-sided with a circuit of 64 feet. A flight of 51 steps carries us to the first story, which is 39 feet from the marble platform. The number of steps between the first and the second stages is 49. The latter rises $35\frac{1}{4}$ feet. The third story is $38\frac{3}{4}$ feet high and the number of steps between the second and third stages is 58. The *kalas* is $23\frac{1}{2}$ feet up from the third landing. The whole minaret is, $162\frac{1}{4}$ feet from the surface of the garden to the top of the *Kalas*. No structure of the kind can compare with these in beauty and shape. In elegance of workmanship they match the best in the world. They are covered on the outside with marble slabs united with a streak of black stone between, which sets off their beauty admirably. The respective height of the Rauza and the minarets are detailed below:—

Elevation of Minarets.

Feet.

From the surface of the garden to the stone-platform ... 4

| | Feet. |
|--|--------|
| From the surface of the garden level to the marble terrace | 22½ |
| " " " to the top of minaret | ...137 |
| " " " to the apex of the <i>Kalas</i> (pinnacle). | 162½ |

Elevation of the Rauza.

| | Feet. |
|---|---------|
| From the garden level to the apex of the arch | ... 89 |
| " " " to the upper part of the roof | ...114½ |
| " " " to the springing of the dome | ...139½ |
| " " " to the summit of the springing | ...213½ |
| of the dome (base of metal pinnacle). | |
| " " " to the summit of the pinnacle | ...243½ |

The top of the *Kalas* on the middle dome is 243½ ft.

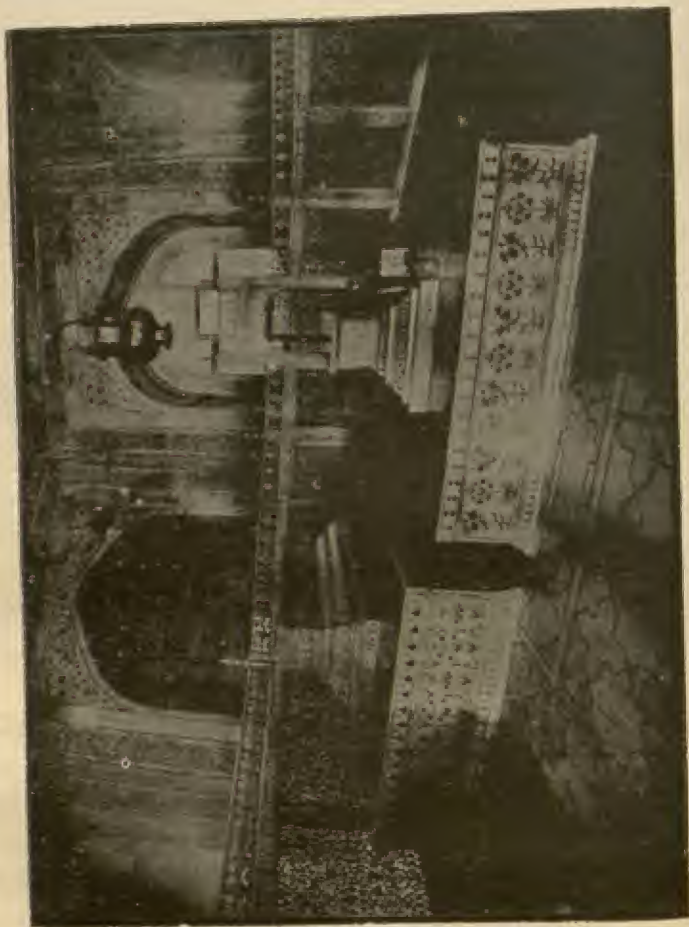
Comparison with Kutub Minar at Delhi. from the level of the garden and 270 ft.
from the river level. Our readers will

be astonished to hear that the altitude of this dome is greater than that of the Kutub-Minar at Delhi. At first sight the latter appears to be the loftiest tower in the world, although the height of all its five parts put together comes up to 238 feet only; whereas the altitude of the middle dome of Rauza from the garden level to the top of the *kalas* is 243½ feet. The pinnacle of the brow of the arch which gives ingress into the edifice raised over the sepulchre is 92½ feet high from the marble floor. The *maqbara* (sepulchral shrine) is an irregular octagon on a plinth raised 2½ feet. Of the 8 sides, four are larger than the others. The former measures 139 feet, 6 inches; and the latter 33 feet, 6 inches. Each of the large sides has a large arch with a smaller one in the shape of a recess or niche inside opposite to it. The front and the sides of the four large arches are adorned with the

text of "*Ya Sin*" (*Y. S.*),¹ in bold elegant letters. The central gate, southward fronting the garden contains the verses beginning from "*Ya Sin*" to "*Wa hum muhtadun*," (for these are rightly directed); the western door looking towards the mosque is decorated with the holy words commencing the 23rd Book (what reason have I) to the verse ending in "*Illa rahmatam minna wa mataan ila hin*," (they may enjoy life for a season); the north door facing the river is decked with "*Wa iza qila lahum*," (when it is said unto them); continued to "*Fa-anna yubsiroon*," (and how should they see their error); while the eastern door opposite to the Prayer-cloister is embellished with "*wa lau nashao lamasakhna hum*," (and if we pleased we could transform them into other shapes); on to "*eleihe turjaoon*," (unto whom you shall return), the end of the chapter of "*Ya Sin*." Here against the rule generally observed in such cases, a blank space has been left, intended probably for the date to be filled in. The actual cause of the omission however is not known. These inscriptions again display the skill of the extraordinary calligrapher, Amanat Khan Shirazi. They are uncommonly beautiful. They look as if they had been worked with a machine. The black-stone in marble has a charm seldom produced by the Grecian chisel.

The niches or recesses are similarly beautified with extracts from the holy Koran. The chapter

1. Chapter 36, p. 330 (Sale). This chapter contains 83 verses. The Mohammedans read it to dying persons to soothe the agony and to direct the soul to Heaven.



No. 5.

Interior of the Cenotaph Chamber.

"*Izish-Shamso Kuvvirat*," (the folding up),¹ is inscribed round the recess of the central door; the one opposite the mosque on the western door has "*Iz-as-samaun /atarat*," (the cleaving in sunder);² with date 1046 A. H. at the end; the north door is consecrated with "*Iz-as-samaun shagqat*," (The rending in sunder);³ and the fourth southern door bears "*Lam-yakonil lazina kafaroo*," (the evidence),⁴ in full.

We return to the central door, and now go in. The

The interior and its workmanship.

threshold is $42\frac{5}{12} \times 25\frac{7}{12}$ feet. The interior is indeed very remarkable.

The building is an irregular octagon. On the four smaller sides are four eight-sided rooms, each of which has a diagonal of 26 feet 8 inches. The floor is paved with octagonal pieces of marble most elegantly set in. The four large ones have square rooms raised on them. Each of these is 15 feet, 11 inches square. Both sets of rooms communicate with each other by a kind of gallery or veranda. These passages are of equal length, viz, 16 feet and 3 inches. There has been a regular order observed in the rooms and the passages. The entrance leads into a square room, then on either hand run the octagonal rooms, and the square rooms, with passages between them in systematic series; so that a walk through all the rooms brings the visitor without interruption to the entrance room back again. The

1. Chapter 81, p. 438 (Sale).

2. " 82, p. 439. "

3. " 84, p. 441. "

4. " 98, p. 451. "

rooms as well as the passages are of pure marble, polished and shining. The mosaics and arabesques are seen here in their ideal perfection. Marble and gems have been worked into plant-life and bouquets with uncommon nicety. Buds some closed, others opening; flowers in full bloom or partly blown; and leaves bent with the breeze and casting a shadow, are all wrought almost to reality. They fill us with admiration of the masters of the art that lived in by-gone days.

In the centre of those structures lie the receptacles which hold the ashes of Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal. These are the most admirable objects of all. Here the artist seems to have exhausted all his ingenuity and skill. It is the most perfect piece of all his work. The mosaics, the arabesques, the frescoes, the painting, the inscription, the caligraphy, have all been done most exquisitely.

Egypt and Spain boast of their extraordinary buildings. Some of the Egyptian mosques, and those in Cordova and the edifices *Kasr-uz-zuhra* (Al-cazar) and *Kasr-ul-humra* (Alhambra) in that town, are reckoned among architectural wonders. But the virtuoso of the art will assign the first place to Mumtaz's mausoleum among buildings set up by the Muhammadans; and historians both of Asia and Europe have included it among the wonders of the world. It is considered superior even to the Pyramids of Egypt and other such singular erections. An admirer, who is also a poet, says "The Firmament with his myriads of eyes never

descried on the earth another mansion so splendid, so graceful, and so elegant." The admirable peculiarities of the burial hall can be seen best on the arches and the walls. Every thing there is so fresh and bright as if it was finished but yesterday.

The burial hall of which we have been speaking is a regular octagon, one side of which measures 24 feet, 2 inches. An arch on a plinth $11\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ feet spans the latter. The arches are furnished with screens composed of pieces of glass for the admission of light. The pieces which are square in form are most nicely joined. The four side doors have square screens, with 108 pieces in each. The north, east, and west arches have shutters, each consisting of 474 pieces of glass. The southern one which has the entrance door has 366 pieces. The whole has a curious appearance. There are 2,220 pieces altogether, that make the room a "glass house." The diagonal of this room is 58 feet, and the inside height 80 feet. There are two circles containing inscriptions about the room. The workmanship of these inscriptions has already been described. We shall here only give the inscriptions themselves. The upper circle has "*Tabarakal lazi be yadihil mulko wa huwa ala kulli shaiin Qadir*," (Blessed be He in whose hand is the Kingdom, for He is Almighty),¹ which ends in the lower circle on half the arch of the second door on the east side. At the termination of "*Tabarak-al-lazi*," begins "*Inna fatahna laka fatham mobina*," (Verily

1. Chapter 67, p. 418 [Sale]

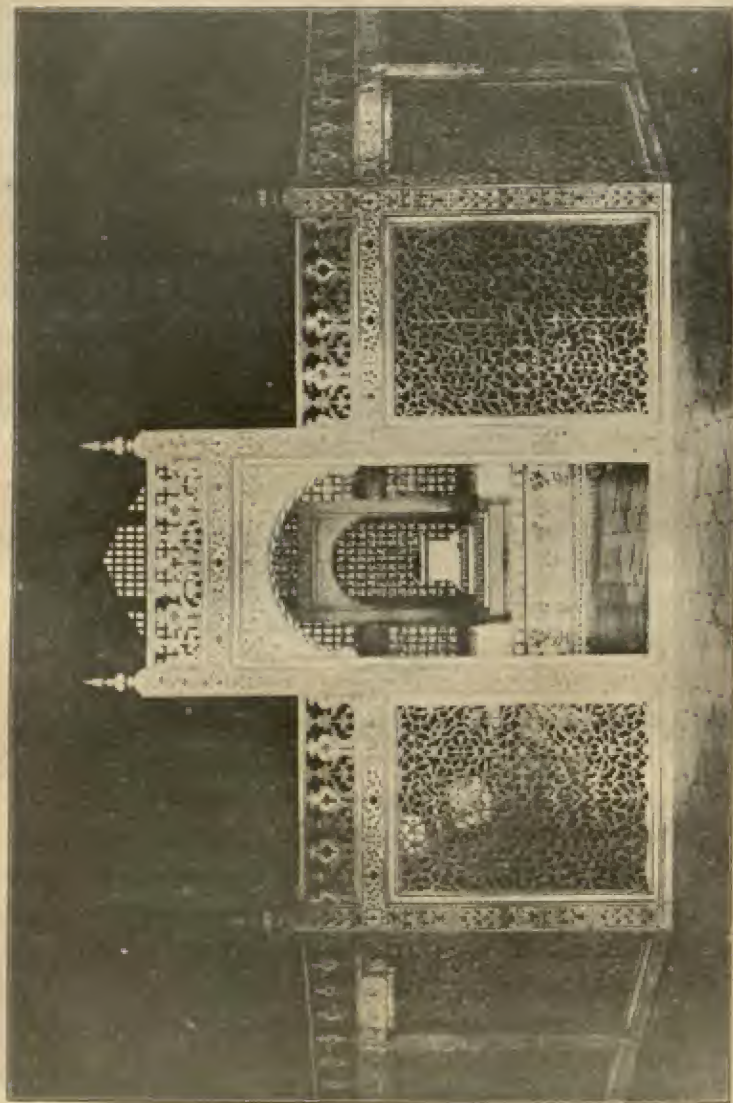
we have granted thee a manifest victory),¹ running on to the middle of the fourth arch; whence commences "*Hal ata a'al inṣane hinum minaddahre lam yakun shaiam mazkoora,*" (Did there not pass over man a long space of time, during which he was a thing not worthy of remembrance?)² continuing to the central door. Then the text "*Qala tabarakal-laho.....la tunsaroon,*" (Say thou, O My servants who have transgressed against yourselves, despair not of the mercy of God; verily, God forgives all sins, verily, He - He is the forgiving, the compassionate, And be ye turned to your Lord and accept Islam before Him, ere there come to you the torment, then shall ye not be helped),³ is inscribed till come the words, "written by the insignificant being, Amanat Khan Shirazi, in the year 1048 Hijra and the 12th of His Majesty's reign," (corresponding with the year 1638 A. D.). These rings of holy inscriptions add to the beauty of the room which is replete with ornaments. The common idea that the text of the whole Koran has been inscribed in the Taj is incorrect. A careful scrutiny reveals that only fourteen chapters of the Holy Writ are strewn here and there throughout the mass of structures. Of those ten are short, contained in the Book of "*Amma yatasaalun,*"⁴ and four are longer, that is, "*Ya Sin,*" "*Tabarak-al-lazi,*" "*Inna fatahna,*" and "*Hal ata,*"

1. Chapter 48, p. 377 (Sale.)

2. Chapter 77, p. 432, (Sale).

3. " 39, p. 348, "

4. This is the 30th and the last Book of the Koran containing 37 chapters.



4. *Muhajjar* or the marble screen enclosing the Tombs of Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan.

In the middle of the hall there is an enclosure of net-work done in marble most elegantly. It is eight-sided, and 6 feet, 2 inches high. It is called *Muhajjar*, an Arabic word equivalent to the English word enclosure. Each side is 12 feet, 2 inches in length and has 3 net-like screens. The screen measures $4\frac{5}{8} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The wall on the northern side has only one screen; the enclosure has an open arch to the south for people to go in and out. Both these arches are $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet high and $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. The marble of the arched doors is the best and most valuable. When the rays of light fall on it, it looks as if thinly coated with gold. A closer inspection shows that particles of gold are set in, in its texture. The fronts of the two arches are ornamented with a fine creeper of gold stone, (*sang-i-tila*), formed with extreme elegance. It looks as if pure gold were embossed on marble. The gold-stone is now as rare as the imaginary philosopher's stone. The part of the enclosure wall just above the screens is similarly adorned with a creeper chiselled out on both sides. Each creeper has eleven figures or a flower-pot with a nosegay between each pair wrought in marble. At the corners are set up marble *kalases* a foot high. Floral ornamentation of an excellent character is all over the enclosure. The gay and bright flowers—all of the same valuable stone—are perfect imitations of nature. They please the eye as if they were real. Some are composed of as many different pieces of valuable stone of various bright colours as one hundred or a hundred and fifty. The tiny pieces are so nicely united

that the figure produced is as perfect as if cut out of a variegated block. The surface is as smooth as velvet. There is here a representation of a leaf like that of the *nim* tree. A whitish stalk divides the blade into two equal parts. The ribs and veins, and the ends of the toothed edges, are all of the same hue. It consists of no less than thirty pieces so exquisitely put together as to require the eye of a Jean Goujon or a Germain Pilon to appreciate its curious workmanship. Shah Jahan, proud of the monument erected to perpetuate the memory of his beloved consort, composed a Persian couplet in praise of the building. Though simple, it well expresses his feelings :—

نمود این عمارت بدلا روزگار که ظاهر شود صنعت کردگار

"Time has wrought this dome passing fine
To show the art and skill divine."

The Badshah Nama tells us that a gold railing set in
Gold railing.
costly gems was prepared in the year
1042 A. H. (1632 A.D.). It served as
a protection of the tomb. It was made under the supervision of Be-badal Khan, Master of the King's kitchen. Forty tolas of pure gold was used. It cost 6 *lacs* of rupees. The floor of the sepulchral hall was covered with Persian and Turkish carpets of the best and costliest kind. It was illuminated with beautiful lanterns, chandeliers, and candelabra.¹ This attractive railing was removed in 1642 A. D. It was replaced by a marble enclosure which is seen to this day. According to

1. Badshah-Nama, Vol: I, p. 487.

the Bádshah-Nama, the enclosure was completed in ten years at a cost of 50,000 rupees. It had a door of Jasper which cost ten thousand rupees.¹

The interior of the enclosure measure 28 feet, 7 inches North and South, and 28 feet, 10 inches East and West. In the heart of it lies the grave-mound which is $6\frac{7}{12} \times 1\frac{7}{12} \times 2\frac{2}{12}$ ft. The platform on which the above stands is $10\frac{2}{3} \times 6\frac{2}{3} \times 1\frac{1}{3}$ ft. The slab over the grave mound is inscribed with the following text from the Holy Book of God:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

يا حي يا قهوم برحمتك أستغوث قال تبارك الله تعالى
إن الذين قالوا ربنا الله ثم استقاموا نزل عليهم الملائكة الأتضاافوا
والنعتونوا وأبشروا بالجنة التى كنتم توعدون - ربنا وسعت كل
شء رحمة و علماً فاغفر للذين تابوا و اتبعوا سميتك وقهم
عذاب النجىهم - ربنا و ادخلهم جنت عدن التى وعدتهم و من
صلح من أبائهم و ازواجهم و ذرياتهم - انك انت العزيز الحكيم

In the name of the Most Merciful God. "O living, O eternal, I beseech Thy mercy. Said the Blessed and Great God, *As for* those who say, Our Lord is God, and who behave uprightly; the angels shall descend unto them; *and shall say*, Fear not, neither be ye grieved; but rejoice in the hopes of paradise, which ye have been promised."² "O Lord, Thou encompasseth all things by Thy mercy and knowledge; wherefore forgive those who repent and follow Thy path, and deliver them from the pains of hell: O Lord, lead them also into gardens

1. Bádshah-nama, Vol: II. pp. 325-326.

2. Chapter 41 [Are distinctly explained] p. 337 [Sale]

of eternal abode, which Thou hast promised unto them, and unto every one who shall do right, of their fathers, and their wives, and their children; for Thou art the mighty, the wise God."¹

On one side of the mound facing the east are inscribed the verses:—

قال الله تبارك وتعالى ان الذين هم على الارواح ينظرون
يعرف في وجوههم نصرة الذموم يستقون من (حديق مضطوم) ختامه
مسك ط وفي ذالك فلويتلا نفس المتلا فسون - و مزاجه من
تسليم عيدا يشرب بها

Said the Almighty, "Verily the righteous shall dwell among delights. Seated on couches they shall behold *objects of pleasure*; Thou shalt see in their faces the brightness of joy. They shall be given to drink of pure wine, sealed; the seal whereof *shall be* musk; and to this let those aspire, who aspire to happiness; and the *water* mixed therewith *shall be* of *Tasnim*, a fountain whereof those shall drink."²

On the side towards the south run the lines containing

المقربون ان الذين قالوا ربنا الله

"Who approach near unto the divine presence."

"As for those who say Allah is our God,

The western side is covered with,

ثم استقاموا الى نزل عليهم الملكة الا تضاعوا ولا تحزنوا و ابشروا
بالتجيلة التي كلتم تومدون ط ربنا ولا تحسنا مالا طاقا لما به واعف
عنا واعف لنا وارحمنا انت مولانا فانصرونا على

1. Chapter 40, (The True Believer), p. 350 (Sale).

2. Chapter 83, (Those who give short measure or weight) p. 449 (Sale).

and who behave uprightly; the angels shall descend unto them, *and shall say*, Fear not, neither be ye grieved; but rejoice in the hopes of paradise, which ye have been promised."¹

"Neither make us, O Lord, to bear what we have not strength to *bear*, but be favourable unto us, and spare us, and be merciful unto us. Thou art our patron, help us therefore against

(North side, القوم الكافرين)
the unbelieving nations."²

The elevation by the headside of the upper slab contains the words.

هو الله الذي لا اله الا هو عالم الغيوب والشهادة هو الرحمن الرحيم

"He is God, besides whom there is no God; who knoweth that which is future, and that which is present. He is the Most Merciful."³ Opposite to the above is the epitaph in Arabic character,

موقد ملور ارجمند بانو بهكم مخاطب به ممتاز محل
توفيت في سنة ١٠٣٠ هـ

"Here lies Arjumand Bano Begum, called Mumtaz Mahal, who died in 1040 A. H." (1630 A. D.).

A covering of pearl-strings worth several *lacs* of rupees was prepared for the tomb. It was spread over it each Friday or the anniversary of her death. Unfortunately Husen Ali Khan, Amir-ul-Umara, who had taken temporary possession of the Agra Fort in 1131 A.H.

1. Ch. 41, (Are distinctly explained), p. 357 (Sale).

2. Ch. 2, (cow), p. 31 [Sale].

3. Ch. 53, (The Emigration), p. 406 (Sale.)

(1718 A. D.), seized upon it together with articles worth 3 *karors* belonging to muntaz Mahal and Nur Jahan.¹ Shah Jahan also lies in the same vault. The two tombs are located rather irregularly, which was apparently due to an unforeseen necessity.

Shah Jahan had contemplated to build for himself another mausoleum like the Taj, in the Mahtab Garden on the other side of the river, and to have the two edifices connected by means of a marble bridge. Steps had already been taken to carry out this design; for there are marks still existing in the garden on the other side of the Jumna. But the plan was not destined to succeed. Intrigues and struggles commenced among the sons of Shah Jahan. Finally Aurangzeb got the King in his power. He shut him up in the fort, where the royal captive remained till 1666 A. D., when he died carrying his cherished hopes with him to the grave.

Mulla Muhammad Kazim, author of the *Atangir Nama* has given particulars relating to the death of Shah Jahan, extracts of which are noted below :—

“In consequence of protracted illness, the Emperor became very weak. His bodily strength failed, and on this account he was attacked with various complaints, so that the treatment of one proved directly injurious to the other. The best physicians thought his case had become very complicated. His hands and feet trembled through extreme weakness, and medicines were of no avail.

1. Muntakhib-ul-Lubab, by Khafi Khan, page 537, vol. II.

At length, at an early hour of the night of Monday,
 His last moment. the 26th of Rajab, (1666 A. D.), his case

having become quite hopeless, the signs
 of death became visible. His Majesty kept his courage at this
 time of trial, and struggled bravely with the last enemy. He
 turned his mind to God, and in an audible voice, offered thanks
 to the Almighty for the thousand gifts He had conferred on
 him. With all sincerity and humility he then prayed
 forgiveness for the sins he had committed in the world; then in
 full possession of his consciousness, he repeated the confession
 of faith. While he was repeating this, his affectionate daughter,

His death

the Malika Jahan Begam (Jahan Ara), and
 other female members of the family, began
 to weep. His Majesty admonished them to be content with
 God's will and to resign themselves to His pleasure. He spoke
 a few consoling words to them, and, immediately after, his soul
 departed from the body.

"By command of Malika Jahan Begum, Raad Andaz
 The funeral ceremonies. Khan, the Commander of the fort, and
 Khwaja Phul presented themselves in the
Ghuskhana. The windows of the gates of the fort were
 opened, and men were sent to call the most revered Syad
 Muhammad Kanauji and Kazi Kurban, the Chief Kazi of
 Akbarabad, to perform the funeral ceremonies. They came
 two watches before sunrise. Although His Majesty, since he
 had attained the age of discretion, had never missed a single
 prayer of the prescribed five times daily prayer, or a single
 fast of the month of *Ramazan*, atonement for them was given
 in a large sum of money, which was set apart for the purpose.
 The two religious men above named were, by order of Malika
 Jahan, called to the *summan Burj*, where the Emperor had
 breathed his last. From this place his body was removed to
 the hall (*evan*) close by, where it was washed according to the
 form prescribed by the Muhammadan law. The body having

then been enclosed in a coffin, holy passages were read over it. Finally, the body was placed in a chest or receptacle of sandal-wood, and the coffin, followed by a procession of mourners, was conveyed out of the fort through the low gate (*darwaza nashab*) of the said tower, which used to remain closed, but was opened for the occasion. The procession then passing through Sher Haji gate opposite the low gate, the coffin was brought out of the fort enclosure.

Haebdar Khan, Viceroy of Agra, accompanied by officers of state, reached the bank of the river at day-break, and the coffin having been conveyed across the river, was entered with due formalities, by the side of the tomb of Mumtaz zamani, in the mausoleum built in her honor by the deceased Emperor, who was now following her to the grave. The prayers over the coffin before its interment were read by his holiness Syad Muhammad, Kazi Kurban and other learned and pious men."¹

Shah Jahan's age at the time of accession was 35 years and 11 months, he reigned for 31 years 6 months and one day, he continued to live in regal state in the Agra Fort for 7 years, 10 months and 26 days. Thus he had lived 76 years, 3 months and 27 days.²

On hearing the Emperor's death, Prince Muhammad Muazzam, the eldest son of Aurangzeb, who was at a distance of seven *Kos* from Agra, arrived in the city the next day. On the following day, he went to the fort and offered condolence to the Begam Sahib and the other female members of the royal family. The whole Kuran was, on that day read by the pious and learned men and

1. *Alamgirnamah* by Mohamad Kasim, p p. 931-934, and Latif's *Agra*, Historical and descriptive, pp. 37-39.

2. *Miftah-ul-Tawarikh*, by T. W. Beale, page, 407, *Ul. Alamgirnamah*, pp. 934-935.

holy passages were recited under the orders of the Prince. A meeting to celebrate the birth-day of the Prophet was held and large sums of money were distributed among the poor and needy as alms.¹

Aurangzeb was, at this time, at Delhi. Hearing of his father's death, he reached Agra on the sixth day. The next day, he went to the tombs of his parents, read the *fatiha*, (prayers for the benefit of their souls), and distributed twelve thousand rupees as alms among the servants and attendants of the mausoleum. He then offered the afternoon prayers in the mosque attached to the mausoleum.²

As long as His Majesty stayed at Agra, he went daily to his parent's tombs and offered the prayers. He held the meetings of *Maulud* in the memory of the birth-day of the Prophet and distributed thousands of rupees to the religious people.³

It is said that on his death-bed Shah Jahan implored Aurangzeb to carry out the scheme he had had in heart. But the latter was too strict a Muhammadan and too economical a ruler to spend the public money on such a purpose. Moreover he was constantly engaged in hostilities, which depleted his treasury of its silver and gold. Consequently he sought the aid of the *Ulamas* to have him absolved from the oath and pledge. The verdict given was, of course, in his favour. Shah Jahan was accordingly laid by the side of his dear queen in the sepulchral dome. "My father," said Aurangzeb, "loved my mother dearly, it is therefore, quite befitting that their ashes should repose in the same place."

1. Alamgirnamah, p. 935., Latif's Agra, page 39.

2. Ibid, p. 935.

3. Alamgirnamah, p. 938, Latif's Agra, page 41.

"Fate," says Taylor, "brought about the wishes of affection in spite of cruel opposition." The part of Shah Jahan's tomb above the ground is $7\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ feet. It is quite close to the wall of the enclosure. The plinth of the superstructure of the grave is $11\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ feet. On the tomb stone is the figure of an inkstand $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet long. The plinths of the two tombs are 8 inches apart. The epitaph runs as follows:—

(عبد)

مرقد مطهر اعلیٰ حضرت فردوس آسمانی صاحبقران ثانی
شاهجهان بادشاه طاب ثراه سنه ۱۰۷۱ هجری

"The sacred sepulchre of His Most Exalted Majesty, dweller of paradise, the second lord of constellation, the King Shah Jahan, may his mausoleum ever flourish, 1076 A. H." (1666 A. D.).

Both the tomb-stones are profusely ornamented with mosaic and floral decoration, particularly that of Shah Jahan's, the figures on which—the flowers and the nosegays—are so beautifully wrought that art can hardly be distinguished from nature. Unfortunately they have suffered sorely at the hands of the vandals who spoiled them of a number of precious stones.

We now return to the verandah. The middle portion of it contains a staircase descending into an under-ground chamber. The passage down to the entrance of the chamber is 34 feet, 9 inches long. The entrance is $7\frac{1}{4} \times 4$ ft., and had once a silver door, which was taken away by the Jats. The chamber itself measures $26\frac{3}{4} \times 22\frac{3}{4}$ feet. In the centre was interred the corpse of Mumtaz. The mound is

The vault.

$8\frac{5}{8} \times 4\frac{5}{8} \times 1$ ft. The middle portion covered by the tomb-stone is as large as that of Shah Jahan's tomb. The inscription contains the following text of the Koran :—

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قال الله تبارك وتعالى قل يا عباده الذين آمنوا عسى أن نسوم لا نقلطوا من رحمة الله ط إن الله يغفر الذنوب جميعاً إنه هو الغفور الرحيم ٥ كل نفس ذائقة الموت ط وإنما لنوفون أجوركم يوم القيامة ط نفس ذحرج عن النار ، أدخل الجنة فقد فاز ط ، ما المحمودة الدنيا الامتناع الغرور ٥ و قل رب اغفر وارحم وأنت ارحم الراحمين ٥

In the name of the Most Merciful God.

The Blessed and Great God said :

“Say, O my servants who have transgressed against your own souls, despair not of the mercy of God : seeing that God forgiveth all sins ; for He is gracious and merciful.”¹

“Every soul shall taste of death, and ye shall have your rewards on the day of resurrection ; and he who shall be far removed from *hell* fire, and shall be admitted into paradise, shall be happy : but the present life is only a deceitful provision.”²

“Say, O Lord, pardon, and show mercy ; for Thou art the best of those who show mercy.”³

1. Chapter 39, p. 348 (Sale).

2. “ 3, p. 51, ”

3. “ 23, (The True Believers), p. 262, (Sale).

lord of constellation, Shah Jahan, the king valiant ; may his mausoleum ever flourish, and may his abode be in the heavens. He travelled from this transitory world to the world of eternity on the night of 28th of the month of Rajab 1076 A. H." (1666 A. D.).

The tombs were adorned with precious gems. Shah Jahan's tomb-stone was brightened with a large diamond of great value. But these are no more. Cruel vandals could not resist the temptation and took them away.

The subterranean chamber is all made of marble. In Summer when it is intensely hot without, it is remarkably cool within. During Shah Jahan's life-time the chamber was opened once a year on the occasion when the solemn rites commemorating the death of Mumtaz were performed. Men of other persuasions, that is, non-Mohammadans had no admission.

Bernier says, "It is opened with much ceremony once in a year, and once only ; and as no Christian is admitted within, lest its sanctity should be profaned, I have not seen the interior, but I understand that nothing can be conceived more rich and magnificent."

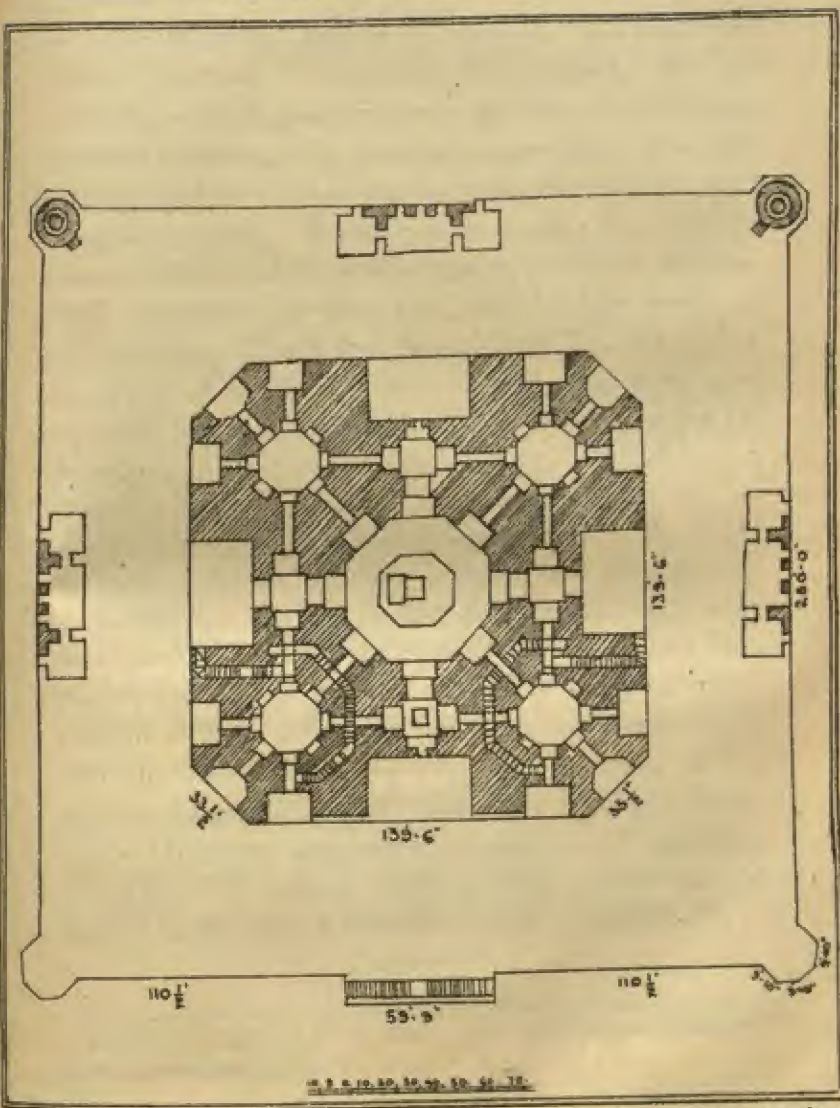
Again on both sides of the verandah there are octagonal rooms, in both of which there is a staircase for going up. The doors of the stair-cases are kept locked. A flight of 46 steps led us to the upper story, which is similar to the lower one. Octagonal rooms are built over octagonal and square over square rooms. They are plastered with chunan

The superstructure.

there is no marble ; but the stucco is so bright and polished that it looks like marble. There are similar passages here for ascending to the highest story. They are rather dark. At the end of 19 steps there is an aperture for light ; again after 9 stairs more a gallery is to be met ; then there are 12 stairs more. In this way, a flight of 44 stairs altogether carries the visitor to the roof which is very lofty, commanding as it does a view of Agra far or near. The sight is very pleasant. The centre of the roof is occupied by a grand dome, matchless in beauty, size, and elevation. The space around is divided into sixteen parts, each 19 feet long. The whole circuit is $274\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The dome is covered with floral ornamentations.

The measurements of the several pieces of the metallic spire of the dome have been already given. On its lowest part is inscribed the first formula of the Moslem faith. The spire has lost its gold coating, the copper only of which it is made is left bare. It is said to be 32 maunds in weight. Its great height renders it difficult to be repaired. The scaffolding costs a great deal whenever anything has to be put right. At the four corners of the roof there are turrets, each having eight doors. Their plinth is raised $6\frac{1}{4}$ feet, the circuit of which is $125\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and the diameter $28\frac{1}{2}$ feet. A narrow gallery goes round the roof. Each varandah is $74\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length, with nine arches and 6 feet high from the base. The roof is decorated with 8 splendid stone bouquets.

Ground Plan of The MAUSOLEUM



After the plan of the

To enable the reader to have an idea of the interior, we append the ground plan of the Taj.

"No building," says G. W. Forrest, "has been more often described, drawn and photographed. But no drawing or photograph can give any idea of so rich and poetical a subject. No description can shadow forth the whole, combined out of marble dome, fair minarets, and fragrant garden. Words cannot express the multitudinous richness of its ornamentation, perfection of form, and minuteness of decoration, each lending assistance to the other. This is true charm of the Taj. It is like unto one of those daughters of gods, who were most divinely fair. It is the fashion now to say that the Taj is lacking in strict architectural beauty. A well known writer states: 'The truth is that the Taj is not an architectural group altogether satisfactory.' No doubt in parts of the Taj genius is brought into jeopardy by unskilfulness: but the divine gift prevails. If a man possesses the sentiment of form the Taj will please him. As we sit on the steps of one of the minarets in the cool air of the evening and gaze upon the marble dome, and the smooth, broad front of marble, warm in the rays of the setting sun, across the memory comes Keats' line.—'In form and shape, compact and beautiful.' What has been said of Keats' St. Agnes Eve may be applied to the Taj—A monody of dreamy richness."¹

1. *Cities of India* by G. W. Forrest, C. I. E., Ex-Director of Records, Government of India, p. 194.

THE JILO-KHANA.

AND

OTHER APPENDAGES

TO

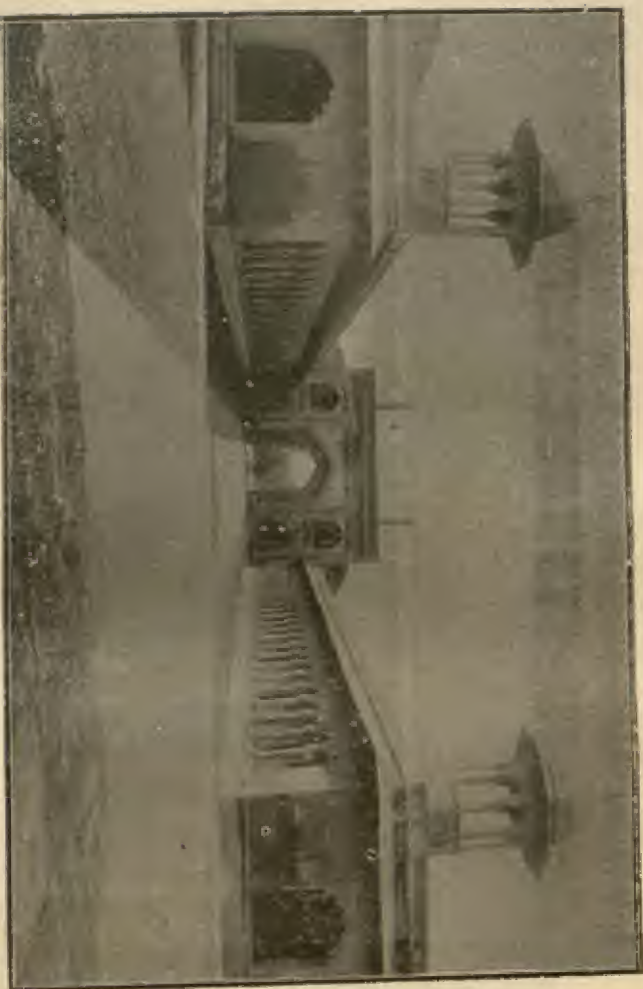
THE TAJ MAHAL.



How sad are thy favours, O Time !

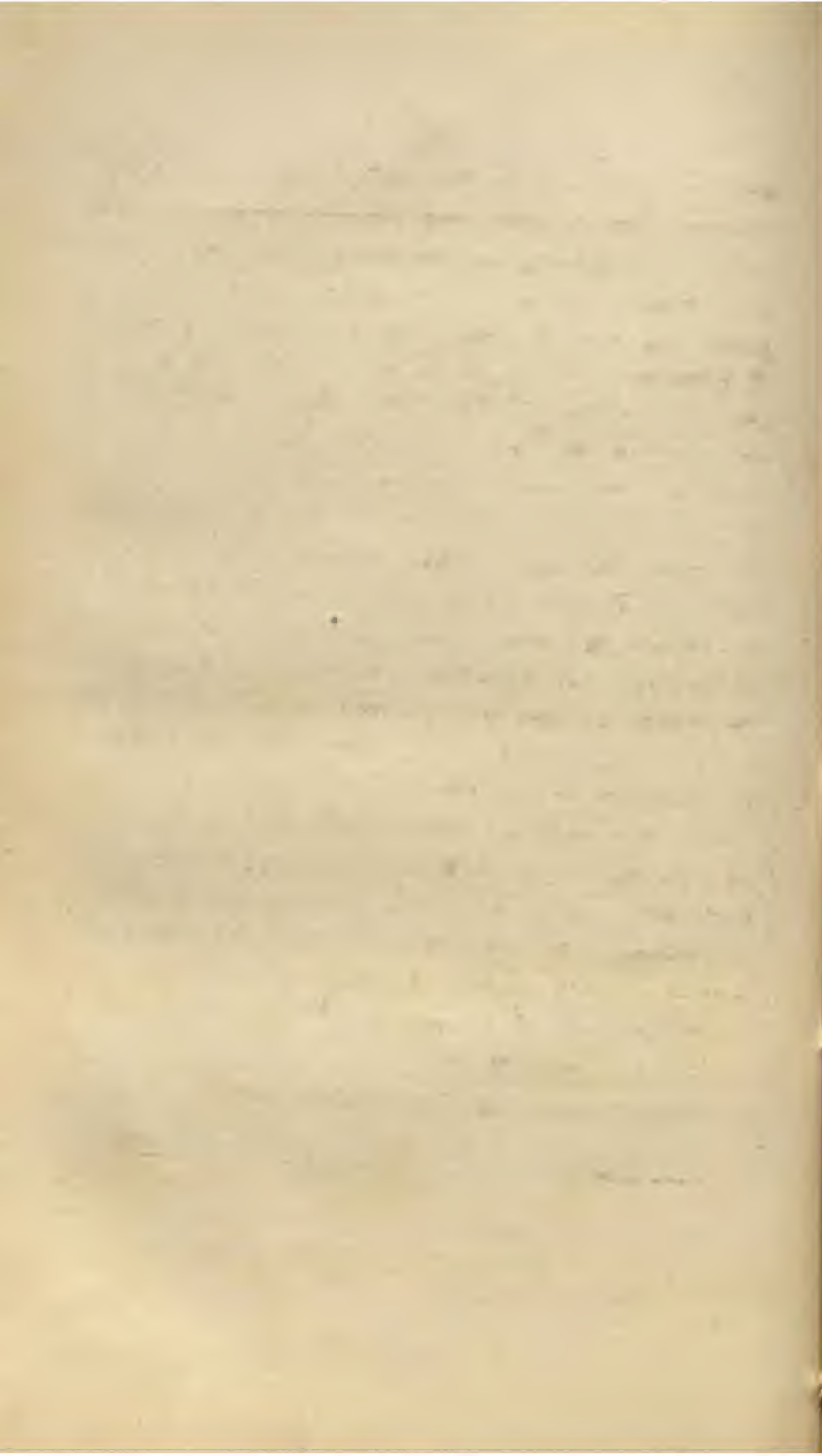
Thou layest thy hand on the princely dome as pitilessly as on a rustic hut.

The place between the chief gate of the mausoleum of Mumtaz Mahal and the grand portal of Mumtazabad was known by the name of *Jilo-khana*. The *Jilo-khana*, the *bazar* and the inn, have changed badly since. A great portion of the splendid buildings that formed once a valuable appendage to the Taj has fallen down. The ruins supply no information. We shall, however, present to our readers what we have culled from the historical work of Mulla Abdul-Hamid of Lahore, called *Badshah Nama*. It was written at Shah Jahan's instance, and is an official and authentic account of that emperor's reign. The words between inverted commas are Abdul-Hamid's, those in brackets are ours. "The *Jilo-khana* is 204 yards long and 150 yards broad. The area enclosed within the four walls is occupied by 128 rooms".....(of these 76 only still remain, the rest have disappeared). "Near to the garden wall there are two *Khawas-puras*, (or enclosed compounds), one to the east of the *Jilo-khana*, and the other to the west; each being 76 by 64 yards, and containing 32 rooms with as



No 6.

The Jho-khana or the eastern part of the quadrangle outside the central entrance gateway.



many vestibules for the attendants."—(At present, the Western *Pura* is filled with flower-pots, and valuable plants. It is a delightful pleasure-ground. Half of the other *pura* is occupied by a cowstable. Over against the *puras* and west and east respectively from the gate of Mumtazabad, lie tombs of Sati-un-nisa Begam and Sarhindi Begam). "The *Jilo-khana* is bordered by *bazars* in the east and west. The rooms are made of brick and lime-mortar and the vestibules of red-stone. The streets are 20 yards wide." (The eastern *bazar* has totally disappeared, the erections on the west are still to be seen). "In the south of the *Jilo-khana*, (that is within Mumtazabad towards the south) the pavement of the street was chequered. The bazar-streets ran north and south, and east and west, cutting each other in the middle at right angles. The former was 30 yards and the latter 90 yards in length. Each section had an inn. Of the four inns, two which were built of brick and lime mortar by the King were 160 yards each. The open area in the middle, called *chawk* or courtyard was eight-sided. Each had 136 rooms with ante-chambers. The inns contained three *chauks*, one on each side. The fourth side had the entrance gate. The *chauks* measured fourteen yards square."¹

"There was a *chawk* (150 × 100 yards), octagonal in shape, in the centre of the *bazar* just mentioned. There were 4 inns where

Mumtazabad.

traders from all quarters of the world bought and sold

1. *Badshahnamah*, Vol : II, pp. 328 and 329.

valuable and rare commodities of every description which were in demand for the domestic use or for luxurious living. The ground at the back of the Government *serais* was occupied by lodging houses and dwellings constructed by merchants at their own expense, and a regular town had grown up being named Mumtazabad, after the queen, in the vicinity of whose mausoleum it lay."¹ A lofty gate exactly opposite to the Taj gate still exists. It is 65 feet 4 inches in height, and its platform is $40\frac{1}{2} \times (16 + 37)$ feet.

Many of the houses in that quarter were built especially for the use of persons connected in one way or the other with the *Rauza*. Mosques and wells, &c., were made for their convenience. They are to be seen to this day. The pretty name of Mumtazabad was subsequently converted into Tajganj—probably by corrupt usage—by which name the quarter is now known. It is considered a part of the Agra town. Most of the people dwelling in it are the descendants of the first inhabitants of Shah Jahan's time. The name of Mumtazabad is forgotten; the pretty, neat *bazar* and the *serais* have disappeared altogether. Time has brought about sad changes. Very little remains of the old Mumtazabad mentioned in the *Badshahnama*.

1. *Badshah Nama*, Vol. II, p. 339.



THE SEPULCHRE

OF

SATIUNNISA KHANUM SADRUNNISA.

We preface the description of the building with a short life of her whose remains are interred there. The lady was of Mazindrani extraction. She was the sister of Talib Amli on whom Jahangir conferred the title of poet laureate. On the death of her husband, Nasira, who was Hakim Rukna Kashi's brother, Satiunnisa became a Maid-of-Honor in Mumtaz-uz-Zamani's household. Her literary abilities and courtly manners, her knowledge of the healing art and domestic economy, secured her the highest position in the bevy of ladies attending on the Royal person. She won the affections and trust of the Queen, and finally became 'Keeper of the seal.' She knew Persian well and could read the Koran with the proper intonation and accent. Satiunnisa was, therefore, appointed tutor to Her Royal Highness Jahanara Begum alias '*the Begam Sahiba*.' Mumtaz Mahal loved her amiable and talented companion and was very fond of her. She could not bear to be separated from her.¹ Mulla Abdul Hamid of Lahore says in his Badshah Nama, "Satiunnisa Begum presented the petitions and prayers of the helpless and the needy to her gracious mistress in a becoming and courteous manner, carefully availing herself of the opportunity promising success. She helped her with good advice in matters of importance and in all exigencies. Women in

1. *Mansir-ul-umara* by Nawab Samsam-ud-daula Shah Navaz Khan, Vol: I, p. 160.

distress received assistance from the Queen with due regard to their social position in the shape of grants of land, or of a daily allowance or in cash, through her representations and recommendation. The daughters of the indigent were married, the necessary bridal dresses, ornaments or cash, and other things customary for a bride to take with her to her new home being provided."¹ Charity thus constantly flowed from the palace of that Queen of blessed memory. Satiunnisa accompanied her mistress to Burhanpur. She mourned her when she died. Her sympathy consoled Shah Jahan in his grief. Death could not part her from her friend. She lived six months in the Garden of Zinabad, where Mumtaz's body was temporarily deposited, like a devoted follower who guards the shrine of his saintly spiritual-master. She escorted the remains from Burhanpur to Akbarabad. Her fidelity and affection won the reward they deserved. She was Mumtaz's favourite as long as she lived; and after her death, she was treated with the same kindness and confidence by Shah Jahan, who appointed her the chief supervisor of the Royal Harem.²

Satiunnisa was childless. She adopted her two nieces when her brother Talib Amli,³ the poet laureate,

1. *Badshahnamah*, Vol: I, p. 151.

2. *Ibid*, p. 403.

3. Talib Amli was a poet and was a native of *Amil* in Persia. He came to India in Akbar's time and lived till the reign of Jahangir. The latter esteemed him highly, and in 1028 A. H. (1619 A. D.) made him Poet laureate. He died in 1035 A. H. (1625 A. D.) at the age of 100 years. He has left a collection of poems consisting of 14000 couplets. (*Oriental Biographical Dictionary*, by T. W. Beale, p. 399).

died. One was married to Akil Khan,¹ and the younger to Zia-ud-din, who received the name of Rahmat Khan² from the King. Zia-ud-din was the son of Hakim Kutba, brother of Hakim Rukna.³ Sati-un-nisa's younger niece died, when lying in, at Lahore in 1646, (17th Zilhij, 1056 A. H.), the 20th year of Shah Jahan's reign. This bereavement broke the aunt's already tried heart. The untimely death of her darling girl overwhelmed her with grief inconsolable. She shut herself up in her palace outside the town. The king being there at that time he paid her a visit of condolence. Her weak heart could not however stand the shock it had suffered and she died eleven days after. Shah Jahan was in the garden called Faizbaksh, when the sad news was brought to him. It caused him bitter sorrow. He told his steward, Mulla Ala-ul-mulk Fazil Khan Tuni, to take ten thousand rupees from the royal treasury for the funeral expenses of the deceased. Her corpse was temporarily deposited by the Mulla and his associates, Hakim Masih-uz-Zaman, and Akil Khan and Rahmat

1. For Akil Khan Inayatullah, see *Maasir-ul-umara*, Vol. II, pp. 790-791.

2. For Rahmat Khan Hakim Zia-ud-din, see *Maasir-ul-umara* Vol. II, pp. 283-285.

3. Hakim Rukna was the son of Hakim Nizam-ud-din Ahmad kashi. He was born at Kashan. He was an excellent physician. Shah Abbas of Persia highly esteemed him. But his ill-humour was against him and he left his native country for India, where Akbar showed him great kindness. He passed many years in the service of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan. When quite old he went back to Persia well-rewarded by his royal master. He sent panegyric verses to Akbar from time to time, for which he received large sums of money. He died in Persia in 1056 A. H. (1646 A. D.), *Oriental Biographical Dictionary* by T. W. Beale, p. 385.

Khan, as directed by the king. A year and some months after it was conveyed to the capital and finally interred near the Jilo Khana square to the south-west of the Rauza. The building over the tomb cost thirty thousand rupees. A village bringing in the same amount annually was granted in perpetuity for the ordinary expenses and for the funeral solemnities to be performed yearly on the recurrence of the day on which she died.¹ The quarter called *Chitti Khana* in Agra was founded by Satiunnisa. Its original name was Satti Khana which has been corrupted into the name it now bears. Revolutions and changes which have occurred since then have swept away numberless monuments of genius, benevolence, and religious zeal ; and as a matter of course the memorials of Satiunnisa's goodness have also been effaced.

The sepulchre of Satiunnisa Khanam lies to the south-west of the Jilo-khana square and to the east of the Fatehpuri mosque. There is a yard, one hundred and thirty-seven feet square, on the east side. Its centre is occupied by an artificial square fountain, the wide margin of which is 22 feet and 3 inches long. A verandah goes round the building. It consists of eight divisions, each $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length with three elegant arches. There are 24 arches in the whole verandah, each $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet in width. The varendah itself is $12\frac{1}{2}$ feet broad. The hall is a regular octagon with a side including the arch $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length. Of its eight arches,

1. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, Vol. II, pp. 791-792.

seven are closed with a network screen of red-stone, very nicely sculptured. A wooden door is fitted to the south arched entrance for admission to the tomb. The tomb is all elegant. It pleases both the eye and the mind. It is paved with marble. The lower portions of the walls are also of the same stone. The inside of the arched roof is faced with red stone. In the middle of the hall lies the tomb, a structure of shining marble. The platform of the tomb is $9\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{4}$ feet, and the upper part is $6\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$. It is adorned with arabesques, and the sides of the tomb are embellished with traceries, a creeper being very exquisitely chiselled out in the marble slab. On either side of the entrance there is a staircase consisting of 15 steps. The roof is $18\frac{1}{2}$ feet high from the platform of the court. It has an elegant dome of marble in the middle on a plinth of eight sides, each $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The roof is decorated with 24 bouquets, each $8\frac{1}{4}$ feet high. The western wall facing the Fatch-puri mosque contains 9 screens cut in red stone. They are 64 feet long and 9 feet high, and are capped with pinnacles. The western wall of the building is $166\frac{1}{2}$ feet long. Along the foot of it stretches a platform $56\frac{3}{4}$ feet broad. At its southern end are two chambers and a hall for the attendants and keepers of the tomb. The hall is quite dilapidated but the chambers are still standing. The structure had its walls and ceiling covered with floral ornamentation and paintings of an admirable character. But the ravages of time, aided by the negligence of the townsfolk, who have been in the habit of resorting to it for their "*Diwanis*" or picnics, have had

the effect of leaving it disfigured. It now looks like a cook-room, all darkened with smoke. Its former beauty and lustre have passed away.

THE SEPULCHRE OF SARHINDI BEGUM.

This sepulchre is situated over against the *maqbara* of Satiun-nisa Khanam and to the southeast of the Taj Mahal. It is exactly like the Khanam's *maqbara*. It has the same kind of verandah, eight-sided with twenty-four arches, and the same kind of octagonal hall. They are both the same size. The one is a copy of the other, with this difference that the stone work of Sati's tomb is adorned with floral work, while Sarhindi's tomb is only ornamented with mosaics. The neglected condition of the building excites pity. The lady who sleeps there was Shah Jahan's wife. She was a native of Sirhind, and was a beauty of her time. The tomb-stone referred to is a piece of admirable workmanship. It is in no way inferior to that of her rival, Mumtaz's sepulchre, in beauty or in exquisite ornamentation. The tomb-stone and the platform both are made of valuable bright marble. It was inlaid with gems all over. Delicate flowers and leaves in mosaic once embellished it; but they have been so roughly handled by pilferers that the tomb is now deformed with unsightly hollows. Not a single gem is to be seen in it, but there are red spots as if they were blood stains from the broken heart of the ill-treated structure. So badly neglected has it been that it has not only been stripped of its rich ornaments but

In the 28th year of the Emperor's reign the distinction of *Dohazar Pansadi* with 500 horse, and the appellation of Rizwi Khan, were conferred on him, and he was sent to Ahmadabad as Intelligence Officer and chronicler. On his return to Agra after two years he was appointed Intelligence Officer. In the second year of Alamgir's reign he retired on an annuity of twelve thousand rupees. A few years later the Saiyad, however, resumed public service and served Jahanara Begam as her Diwan, and then he was elevated to the most honourable position of High Chancellor, which he held for a period of eight years until his death in 1680. It is uncertain where he was buried; probably by the side of his father, Saiyad Jalal. Saiyad Jalal's daughter was married to Sheikh Farid, son of Saiyad Bukhari *alias* Dindar Khan.¹

THE GARDEN OF KHAN ALAM MIRZA BARKHURDAR.

This large garden lies between Saiyad Jalal Bukhari's tomb and the Taj. It is walled. The Western wall contains a strong gate. In the middle there is a plot of raised ground, the floor stones of which, we hear, have been sold off. A piece of masonry wall stands there such as might be seen at the heads of tombs for the purpose of holding a lamp. We may surmise them that Khan Alam lay there. The tomb-stone is gone, perhaps parted with for money's sake. Seven graves lie side by side on a mound, $54\frac{1}{2}$ by $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet on the North. There is no inscription to tell us to whom they belong. The structure of the tomb-stones indicates that they were built during the reigns of Shah Jahan or Alamgir. A fine house stood at one time in the garden northward, but it has since been pulled down along with others, and the materials disposed of. There still exists an underground chamber by the river side beneath the debris of the demolished buildings. In 1898 a wealthy gentleman of Aligarh in

1. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, Vol. III, pp. 447-451.

whose possession the garden was, sold it with its belongings for four thousand rupees to a prostitute who would have had everything levelled to the ground had not Mr. E. Rose, then Commissioner of Agra, saved it by purchasing it from her for Government.

Few persons know who and what Khan Alam was. It will, therefore, be appropriate to append a biographical note respecting this important personage of aristocratic blood. He was the son of Dawaldi Khan, whose ancestors were faithful followers of Timur's descendants, and their valuable services were well rewarded by them. Mir Shah was one of the greatest nobles and a staunch adherent of Timur's. Mirza Barkburdar, the subject of our narrative, held the *Mansub of Do sad Pinjah* till the 40th year of Akbar's reign. When Dalpat Ujjaini, who had raised the standard of revolt in the province of Bihar, was set at liberty, the Mirza attacked him on his way home to retaliate the murder of his father, Abdul Rahman Khan. Dalpat escaped into the jungle. This conduct of the Mirza's angered Akbar, who ordered that he might be arrested and taken to the Ujjaini chieftain. Intercession, however, saved him from that disgrace but not from imprisonment to which his rashness had rendered him liable. Since he frequently visited Prince Salim and was an excellent huntsman, his sentence was remitted on the accession of Salim to the throne, and the office of *Kaush Begi* was bestowed on him. In the fourth year of his reign, Jahangir honoured him with the title or court appellation of Khan-i-Alam. Two years later he was deputed to Persia in company with Yadgar Ali Sultan, the Persian envoy, whom Shah Safwi had sent to the court of Jahangir with letters of congratulation and condolence.

The Shah being occupied with Political matters in Azarbaijan, a province in the north of his dominions, Khan Alam was detained at Herat and Kum for a time. According to Massir-ul-Umara the Mogal envoy was

well escorted. He had 200 *kooshchis* and huntsmen as well as 1,000 faithful men of the imperial army. Finding that he would be detained longer than he expected, he sent back a portion of his following to India. There were 700 or 800 men with him when the Shah returned from the frontier in 1617 A. D. He proceeded to the capital with the splendid presents he had brought from the Moghal emperor for the Persian monarch, ten elephants with silver and gold *howdas* and various kinds of trappings, fine horses, Gujrati bullocks, singing birds, beautifully equipped bullock conveyances, and palanquins painted in glowing colours. Khan Alam was received by the Persian grandees and lodged in the garden of Saadatabad. He waited on the Shah when he was recreating himself in the field near his lodgings with the games of polo and quoits. The King treated him honourably and kindly. He said, "since Jahangir and I love each other with brotherly affection, and he calls you "cousin" you are my cousin also." He then embraced him. It was Khan Alam's intention to present the gifts one by one; but finding the king in a hurry to go out on a hunting excursion to shoot the *Zangol* that abound in those regions, he handed over all the presents at once. The host was so much gratified by the amiable manners of his guest that he was barely satiated with his society. If Khan Alam could not call upon His Majesty any day, the latter would go to the former's lodgings himself. The familiarity grew such a degree that the Shah called him "my Khan Alam."

Khan Alam performed his mission most satisfactorily, and won golden opinions of the Persians by his ability and liberality. Sikandar Beg who wrote the *Tarikh-i-Alam Ara* says, "Khan Alam entered Kazvin with ostentation and pomp unprecedented in the history of embassies. No envoy from India or Turkey ever came to Persia with such magnificence and splendour since the beginning of the Safwi dynasty."

Khan Alam returned from Persia in 1619, when Jahangir was making preparations for a journey to Kashmir for the first time. He met him at Kalanor. The emperor showed unusual kindness to him. He accommodated him in his own bed-room, and in token of special regard and affection supplied him with his own quilt. He was made a *Panj-hazari* with three thousand horse. We are surprised to find Mullah Abdul Hamid of Lahore making the remark in his *Badshah Nama*, "Khan Alam was deficient in diplomatic eloquence and tact, the indispensable qualifications of a good ambassador, and consequently failed in discharging his duties efficiently." The worthy historian made such an ungenerous remark probably out of prejudice, and it represents his own opinion. In the reign of Shah Jahan we find the Khan *Shash hazari*, with 5,000 horse, provided with a pennon and kettle drum—the symbols of baronial dignity—and administering Bihar as Mirza Rustam's successor. On Shah Jahan's coming back to the capital from Burhanpur, he became a courtier but was pensioned off shortly afterwards on the score of old age and infirmities. He spent his remaining days in happy retirement at Agra, enjoying his annuity of one hundred thousand rupees, and died well advanced in age, and was buried in his garden. He left no issue. He had a brother, Mirza Abdul Subhan, who was *Faujdar* (military officer) of Allahabad. The latter was subsequently sent to Kabul where he was killed in a skirmish with the Afridis. His son, Sherzad Khan, who was a brave warrior, fell in an action on the side of Khan Jahan Lodi. According to the *Tarikh i-Alam Ara*, Khan Alam received the affectionate appellation of 'Bhai' (cousin) from Jahangir.¹

THE SEPULCHRE OF DIWANJI BEGAM.

This sepulchre is situated in the lands of Bassai village. Nothing of the structure remains except an eight-sided tower, measuring 28 feet through, and that

1. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, Vol : I, pp. 732-736.

too in a dilapidated condition. It contained the tomb, the inscription of which however is gone.

Diwanji Begam was daughter of Khwaja Ghias-ud-din of Kazvin and wife of Mirza Abul Hasan Asaf Khan. She was the mother of Mumtaz Mahal. Her sepulchre, a grand building standing in the midst of a plot 50 acres in extent, was erected in the reign of Jahangir¹

The Khwaja's father Mulla Aka Dwatdar was a courtier of the Persian King, Shah Tahmasp Safwi. His other sons, Badi-ul-zaman and Mirza Ahmad Beg, held the posts of minister at the same court. "Mulla Aka," says the writer of *Maasir-ul-Umara*, "was a descendant of His Holiness Sheik Shahab-ud-din Suhrawardi, whose genealogy could be traced to Muhammad Bin Abu Bakr Siddiq, the first Caliph.

Khwaja Gias-ud-din of Kazvin, on his arrival at Agra, succeeded in securing the post of *Bakshi*. In the year 1573, Akbar gave him the honorary appellation of Asaf Khan, and in the 23rd year of his reign, he sent him to put the affairs of Malwa and Gujrat to right. He died, while in the latter province, in 989 A. H. (1579 A. D.).²

Diwanji Begam's husband, Mirza Abul Hasan Asaf Khan, was the son of Mirza Ghias Beg, Etmad-ud-daula, whose history has already been given.³

The Begam's monument was an exquisite building, which stood in the midst of a spacious garden, and was visited by natives and foreigners. It has lost all the splendour of the times of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, and is now in a pitiful condition. The grave itself is broken up—the marble slab, which covered it, has been carried off, the walls levelled to the ground, the roof, under which visitors found shelter from rain and the rays of a

1. Beale's Biographical Dictionary, p. 120.

2. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, Vol. I. pp 90-93.

3. *Ibid*, pp. 151-160.

tropical sun, has ceased to exist. The rest of the surrounding tombs and monuments are likely to share the same fate.

Close to the tomb of Diwanji Begam and to the southwest of it, there lies in the Ballochpura quarter of Tajganj a grand-looking mosque of red stone. Its platform is $14\frac{1}{2}$ feet in height. It contains 15 arched doors, and measures $64\frac{1}{2} \times 34\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The middle arch has the *Ayat-ul-Kursi* inscribed on it, with the date, 1088 A. H. (1678 A.D.), of the erection of the mosque. The builder's name is not traceable. Very likely it was older than the above date. The building was probably repaired in that year. It appears to be contemporary with the sepulchral monument of Diwanji Begam. The open space of the mosque is $64\frac{1}{2} \times 55$ feet. Just below it, there is an artificial fountain, $29\frac{1}{2} \times 26\frac{1}{2}$ feet, for the purposes of ablution. The mosque was in the charge of the Agra Local Agency, which realized the rent of the shops—nine in number—belonging to it, yet it was kept in very bad condition, being destitute of everything that is necessary.

THE DWELLING OF KHAN DAURAN NASRAT JANG.

The real name of Khan Dauran was Khwaja Sabir. He was the son of Khwaja Hisari, a member of the *Naqshbandi* order. Jahangir made him an officer of high rank and sent him to the Deccan. Khan Khanan, finding him a youth of enterprising spirit endeavoured to give him the necessary training. But finding the work distasteful, Sabir left Khan Khanan and went to Nizam Shah, and succeeded through a friend at the latter court in securing the post of aide-de-camp to the Shah. Here also he did not remain long. He felt an aversion to the work and resigned his post. He then got employment as a personal attendant of Prince Shah Jahan who called him Nasiri Khan. He served his new master

obsequiously, descending on occasions to adjust even the saddle and bridle of the Prince's horse. He was leader of the King's troops in the battle of Tunis. In the second year of his reign, Shah Jahan conferred on him the rank of *Seh-Hazari* with two thousand horse and the honorary title of Nasiri Khan. In the following year, he accompanied Raja Gaj Singh, whom Shah Jahan had sent with a strong force to chastise Khan Jahan, Malik Nizam Shah and the neighbouring princes. Khan Dauran (Nasiri Khan) then wrote to the Mughal emperor that if the reduction of Tilangana and Qandhar were entrusted to him instead of Rao Ratan, he would gratify his Majesty's wishes in a short time. The prayer was granted and the command of the expeditionary force was given to him, with the rank of *Chahar Hazari* with three thousand horse.

Nasrat Jang first marched to Qandhar and overcame Sarfaraz Khan, an important chief of the country. The fort was besieged. Moqarrab Khan, Bahlol Khan and Randaula Khan, whom Adil Shah had sent to reinforce the besieged garrison, were surprised at the courage and valour displayed by Shah Jahan's general. In the meantime Azam Khan, Subahdar of the Deccan, came to help and the garrison had no remedy but to surrender. After a siege of four months and 19 days, the keys of the fort were delivered by Sadik, the son-in-law of Yakut Khudawand Khan. Every thing in the fort was taken possession of by the conqueror. This conquest of Qandhar took place in the fourth year of Shah Jahan's reign, 1040 A. H. (1630 A. D.). The distinguished services of the brave general were rewarded with the addition of *Hazari* with one thousand horse to the rank he already held. In the same year, he was sent with *mahi maratib* to Balaghat in the Deccan. The following year he was appointed Governor of Malwa. In the sixth year of his reign, Shah Jahan sent him to the aid of Mahabat Khan, engaged in reducing the fort of Daulatabad. He distin-

guished himself there as well, and the King was pleased to confer on him the rank of *Panj Hazari* with five thousand horse and the distinction of Khan Dauran. Another feat of boldness performed by him was to put Jajhar and his son to the sword and to send their heads according to the custom of the age, to the Emperor, who rewarded his valour with the title of Babadur, the brave. In the 13th year of the Emperor's reign he was recalled from the Deccan for political reasons. He then accompanied the Emperor to Kashmir, whence he returned to Lahore. When within two miles of the town he halted, and that same night in the silent hours, he was stabbed while asleep in the belly by a Kashmiri lad of the Brahman caste, who was a convert to Muhammadanism and was kept by him as a personal attendant. He patiently submitted to the pain of the suture, and passed that day without any symptom of insensibility. He then engaged himself to divide his property—cash and all moveables among his sons, and the rest he bequeathed to his Imperial master, to whom he owed everything he possessed. After this he informed the Emperor of what had happened. The effect of his deadly injuries were soon felt and he breathed his last during the ensuing night, 1055 A. H. (1645 A. D.). Shah Jahan sent his remains to be buried in the family vault at Gawalior, and gave his sons more than the father could have willed.

Khan Dauran was a man of strict principles. Avarice had no place in his composition. His unflinching assiduity and care and caution in the discharge of his multifarious duties were remarkable. But he was of a suspicious disposition though vigorous in action. He treated the people with great severity. He was so unpopular that when the news of his violent end reached Burhanpur, the inhabitants made great rejoicings.

Most of the edifices of any pretension in Burhanpur were built in his time. The inns between that town and Sironj were constructed by him. He left three sons—

| Serial No. | ITEM. | Amount. | | |
|------------|--|---------|----|----|
| | | Rs. | A. | P. |
| 30 | The great hall of the red-gate in the south-east, ... | 19,635 | 8 | 0 |
| 31 | The great hall of the red-gate in the south-west, ... | 13,673 | 10 | 0 |
| 32 | <i>Rauza</i> garden with the large marble fountain ... | 53,653 | 14 | 0 |
| 33 | <i>Jilo-khana</i> , &c., ... | 55,424 | 15 | 0 |
| 34 | Outside cluster of habitations (<i>katras</i>), | 42,114 | 11 | 0 |
| 35 | Cow-stables, &c., ... | 21,915 | 10 | 0 |
| 36 | Elephant stables, &c., ... | 14,915 | 11 | 0 |
| 37 | Travellers' lodgings, ... | 15,214 | 10 | 0 |
| 38 | Camel stables, ... | 11,122 | 0 | 0 |
| 39 | King's own palanquin house, ... | 77,618 | 2 | 0 |
| 40 | Palanquin yard of Muntaz Mahal ... | 25,455 | 0 | 0 |
| 41 | <i>Tawiz</i> of sandal-wood and coffin, ... | 4,152 | 3 | 0 |
| 42 | <i>Bazar</i> facing to the east, ... | 11,224 | 2 | 0 |
| 43 | " " " west, ... | 12,212 | 6 | 0 |
| 44 | Gate " " east, ... | 54,280 | 2 | 0 |
| 45 | " " " west, ... | 74,005 | 13 | 0 |
| 46 | " " " South, ... | 11,281 | 2 | 0 |

| Serial No. | ITEM. | Amount. | | |
|------------|---|---------|----|----|
| | | Rs. | A. | P. |
| 47 | Keys' closet | 18,915 | 2 | 0 |
| 48 | Outside <i>Khawaspura</i> looking towards the east | 13,917 | 2 | 0 |
| 49 | West <i>Khawaspura</i> , | 19,113 | 10 | 0 |
| 50 | South " | 16,105 | 5 | 0 |
| 51 | North <i>Khawaspura</i> , | 45,105 | 10 | 0 |
| 52 | The brass <i>kalas</i> of the large dome, 33 maunds in weight, | 13,688 | 3 | 0 |

Writers do not agree as to the time this edifice took for its completion. The inscriptions tell us that it took not less than twenty years. Mumtaz-uz-Zamani died in 1630. The construction began the following year. The dates given in the several inscriptions indicate that the inscription on the entrance gate was the last. It is dated 1057 A. H., which corresponds with 1647 A. D. This calculation gives 17 years, but the work continued two or three years longer ; and the whole period comes up to twenty years. According to Tavernier it was completed in 22 years. Tavernier was in India in 1653, twenty-two years later, after the death of the Queen. He left for his home the following year. His statement therefore

appears to be correct.¹ The *Badshah Nama* of Abdul Hamid Lahori says that the edifice was built in twelve years. This may mean either that the marble monument took that period to complete or that the principal work of building lasted so many years under the supervision of Mir Abdul Karim and Makramat Khan; and then a reduced establishment carried it on for another ten years. From all these accounts therefore it may be concluded that the chief mausoleum, the *Jilo-khana*, the tombs of Satiunnisa Khanam and Sarhindi Begam; Mumtazabad, the Fatehpuri Mosque, and the Ossuary of the Maids-of-Honor, took not less than twenty years to complete.

ENDOWMENT ASSIGNED TO THE TAJ.

Not a few have found fault with Shah Jahan that he left the monument which still stands unrivalled among buildings of the world, ancient or modern, without making any provision for defraying future expenses for repairs, the salaries of the attendants and the annual *Urs*, (the anniversary of the death), of Mumtaz. This accusation is really due to ignorance. Investigation has brought to light the fact that the landed properties set apart for the purpose were so rich that the revenue from the same would have left a surplus vast enough to produce another edifice of the same kind. We append a detailed

1. Tavernier says, "I saw the beginning and completing of this great work, that cost two and twenty years' labour and twenty thousand men always at work; so that you cannot conceive but that the expense must be excessive."

Tavernier's Travels in India, Part II, Book I, Chapter VII, p. 40.

statement of the endowment for the information of the public in general and of the Supreme Government in particular,—a Government to which we are exceedingly thankful for the generous interest it has evinced for the preservation of India's past glories. This important information has been derived from the *Badshah Nama* of Mulla Abdul Hamid, who is the undisputed authority in the matter. The endowment comprised thirty villages, out of the appendages of Pargana Akbarabad, the capital, and of Nagarchand, yielding 40,00,000 dams or 1,00,000 rupees a year. The assignments are detailed in the table given below¹ :—

| No. | Names of the Villages. | ANNUAL JAMA. | | Present revenue. |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--------------|---------|------------------|
| | | Dams. | Rupees. | |
| 1 | Dhanaui (Greater) or Dhanauli, ... | 3,20,000 | 8,000 | 3,794 |
| 2 | Auhali, ... | 3,00,000 | 7,500 | 891 |
| 3 | Ramanai, ... | 3,00,000 | 7,500 | 726 |
| 4 | Kukthala (Gotla), ... | 2,50,000 | 6,250 | 1,981 |
| 5 | Dhamsari, ... | 2,40,000 | 6,000 | 7,511 |
| 6 | Dakhrota (Dagrota), | 2,00,000 | 5,000 | 4,692 |
| 7 | Samon (Siyamon),... | 2,00,000 | 5,000 | 4,000 |
| 8 | Bodhana (Borhana), | 1,70,000 | 4,250 | 2,430 |
| 9 | Pithauli, ... | 1,60,000 | 4,000 | 3,591 |
| 10 | Theri, ... | 1,50,000 | 3,750 | 2,937 |
| 11 | Atora (Itora), ... | 1,50,000 | 3,750 | 2,377 |
| 12 | Malhpur (Malhpura), | 1,40,000 | 3,500 | 3,152 |

1. *Badshahnama*, Vol : II, p. 330

| No. | Names of the Villages. | ANNUAL JAMA. | | Present revenue. |
|-----|------------------------|--------------|---------|------------------|
| | | Dams. | Rupees. | |
| 13 | Laraenda, ... | 1,20,000 | 3,000 | 2,493 |
| 14 | Jweni, ... | 1,20,000 | 3,000 | 2,298 |
| 15 | Charua (lesser), ... | 1,00,000 | 2,500 | 3,504 |
| 16 | Uncha, ... | 1,00,000 | 2,500 | 2,824 |
| 17 | Karmana, .. | 1,00,000 | 2,500 | 1,580 |
| 18 | Daintora, ... | 1,00,000 | 2,500 | 2,110 |
| 19 | Atos, ... | 1,00,000 | 2,500 | 3,977 |
| 20 | Osra, ... | 80,000 | 2,000 | 1,596 |
| 21 | Sudharban, ... | 80,000 | 2,000 | 2,208 |
| 22 | Bichpuri, ... | 60,000 | 1,500 | 1,068 |
| 23 | Basai, greater, ... | 60,000 | 1,500 | 4,098 |
| 24 | Madina, ... | 60,000 | 1,500 | 2, 9 |
| 25 | Dhandhupur, ... | 60,000 | 1,500 | 1,530 |
| 26 | Sheikhpur, ... | 50,000 | 1,250 | 1,782 |
| 27 | Suthandi ... | 40,000 | 1,000 | 903 |
| 28 | Raipur, ... | 40,000 | 1,000 | 1,360 |
| 29 | Nurpura, ... | 30,000 | 750 | 1,565 |
| 30 | Nagar-chand, ... | 1,20,000 | 3,000 | 1,320 |

This permanent income of a *lac* of rupees from villages was supplemented by an equal amount of receipts from the rents of shops, bazars, and the inns previously mentioned. These sources of income have, however, been swept away since by the cruel hand of usurpation.

The historian above-quoted concludes his account of the endowment with these words of the royal warrant sanctioning the grant for the Taj. "Should there occur an occasion for repairs, the necessary expenditure may be defrayed from the income of the assigned villages and the rents ; the rest may be spent on the salaries of servants and attendants, and charitable objects, regular and miscellaneous, concerning this magnificent building—the surplus, if any, to be spent by the ruler for the time being, at his discretion."¹

Efficient arrangements were thus made by that prudent monarch for the maintenance and support of the servants and attendants attached to the sepulchre, and of the hermits, and poor and needy, dependent upon the same. The surplus was left to be used at the discretion of the reigning sovereign. This valuable evidence of contemporary record enables us to refute the charge brought against Shah Jahan of leaving the monument which he had erected at such enormous cost without provision for its future well-being. He did all he could. He could not of course guard against the possible encroachments of tyranny to which India was subjected during the storms that disturbed her tranquillity during

1. *Badschah Nama*, Vol. II, pp. 330—331.

the decline of the Moghul power. It was probably during the mis-rule of the Jats that usurpation laid its unres-trained hand on what it could find unprotected, and seized upon the lands and other immovables bequeathed by that illustrious monarch for the maintenance of those who tended the tomb, and offered prayers and repeated the Koran for the benefit of the departed soul. The loss is deplorable and the building with its surroundings would certainly have suffered from want of funds to keep them in good order, had not our Government taken upon itself to look after them and devoted large sums to their preservation.

THE FIRST *URS* OF MUMTAZ MAHAL.

Urs is peculiar to the Mohammadans of India. It is a sort of death anniversary, a commemoration of the demise of a holy man with solemnities, prayers and blessings for the soul of the dead. It is held annually on the recurrence of the day on which he died.

Now this ceremony was performed by Shah Jahan in honour of Mumtaz the first time in 1041 A. H. (1631, A.D.). According to the *Badshah Nama* the *Urs* was held with uncommon enthusiasm. The court of the *maqbara* had canopies set up over it. All the princes, courtiers, and the nobles at the capital, attended it. Theologians, and mystics and those who could repeat the Holy Book of God by heart, were invited to it in great numbers. The nobles sat according to their respective ranks under the canopy, the king himself being among them. Yamin-ud-daula Asaf Khan,¹ father of

Mumtaz, and Mohammad Ali, the Persian envoy, took their seats along with them, as desired by the king. Dishes of various kinds and fruits were served up. Verses of the Koran and prayers were repeated and offered for the salvation of the departed soul, while out of a sum of a hundred thousand rupees given for the expenses of the *Urs*, one-half was distributed in alms to the poor the same day ; the other half was given away the following day. It was at the same time enacted by His Majesty that half of the amount spent on this occasion was to be distributed on similar occasions in future, when the king was in the Capital, otherwise a sum of twelve thousand only.¹

The king, his daughter Jahanara, and his queens invariably attended the *Urs*, when in the capital. The ladies sat behind a velvet wall on the middle terrace and the nobles under canopies which were set up in large numbers for this purpose. The money given away in charity amounted to a *Lac* of rupees, and twelve thousand when the king was out of the capital. The *Urs* attracted people from all parts of the Empire. This sacred regard for the *Rauza* and the solemn spectacle of the yearly *Urs* lasted not only as long as Shah Jahan lived, but continued during the reigns of his successors. The expenses too were not, as might have been expected, curtailed.

The Alamgir-Nama states that when Alamgir came to Agra a week after Shah Jahan's death, he paid a visit to the tombs of his parents on the next day of his

1. Badshahnamah, Vol : I, pp. 429-430



arrival. He could not help shedding tears. On coming out after the customary prayers for the dead had been offered, he distributed twelve thousand rupees as alms.¹ The same book tells us that monarch of rigid principles again visited the sepulchre of Mumtaz-uzzamani on 17th Shaban, 1080 A. H., (1670 A. D.), and presented forty-five thousand rupees to the attendants.²

PECULIAR CHARMS OF THE TAJ.

The edifice has certain peculiar charms of its own. It presents a most wonderful sight in moonlight. The dome in the midst of the marble platform shines as a pearl of enormous size placed in a silver plate. The mosaic in the marble looks as a set of jewelled ornaments arranged on a crystal table in a jeweller's shop. The stream gliding below and reflecting the images of the tall trees of the garden overhanging it, the perfect silence undisturbed by the distant echo, the aromatic breezes refreshing the brain fevered by the heat of the tropics, are influences all its own. The interior of the dome independent of its exterior charms possesses a feature known only to those with keen perceptions. The echo there is remarkably sonorous and awe-inspiring. Some visitors have taken special notice of this phenomenon. We would gladly quote the remarks of one of them in his own words but that the language is too floral to please the fastidious taste of an English reader.

1. Alamgir Namah by Mohomud Kazim p. 938. Printed at the College Press, Calcutta.

2. Alamgir Namah by Mirza Mohomud Saqi, p. 44.

The inscription at the entrance gate should be particularly studied. It exhibits a curious phenomenon. A common observer would see only the beauty of Amanat Khan Shirazi's caligraphy; but its chief merit would strike the eye only of the trained expert. The calligrapher's masterly knowledge of the science of optics will ever be noted with admiration. The gate is 80 feet high, yet the letters look uniform in size from top to bottom. Their real dimension of course increases in proportion to their elevation.

Another thing worth noticing is a tree some 425 years old. It stands close to the eastern wall. It is the *sembhal* tree, a kind of cotton. Its girth is $48\frac{3}{4}$ feet. It is nearly twice as old as the building itself in which it is situated. The precept that grey hair should be respected, won for it the honor of being taken within the walls of the famous edifice. There is a label stuck on the outside of it from which its age could be ascertained.

The peerless mausoleum has been an object of admiration to numberless historians and visitors. Laudatory descriptions are to be found in abundance both in prose and poetry. Its soft beauty has won for it the name of 'a charming nymph' from some poetical mind. Others have called it paradise. We have selected from authors of importance certain apt remarks which are given in Appendix III.



BUILDINGS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF THE TAJ.

As the MacDonnell Park now appertains to the Taj and is laid out on Roomi Khan's *tilas* or heaps of ruin, it may not be out of place to attach brief notices of the edifices that once stood in the vicinity of the lordly monument.

THE HOUSE OF ISLAM KHAN RUMI.

This building stood mid-way between the fort and the Taj on the right or southern side of the road. It was so large, so grand, so lofty, and so splendid, that the story of it is still told among the people, though its existence ceased long ago. It was built at great cost by Muqarrab Khan, whose court name was Rustam Khan. He was originally in the service of Nizam-ul-Mulk of the Deccan. In the fourth year of Shah Jahan's reign he received a post of honour in the imperial service. Four years later the king gave him the appellation of Rustam Khan, and further on in the 23rd year of the emperor's reign the title of Firozjang was conferred on him. Six years after, Muqarrab Khan was made a *Shash-hzari*, and with a force of five thousand men, provided with a double or treble complement of horses, was sent to the Province of Kabul as governor on the recommendation of Prince Dara Shikoh. In the engagement between Aurangzeb and Dara at Samogarh in the 31st year of Shah Jahan's reign, he took the side of his benefactor, and bravely fought under the standard of Dara's son, Sipihr Shikoh. He was mortally wounded in the thick of the fight and died 1068 A. H. (1658 A.D.)¹. As Rustam had been a partisan of Dara's, his property was confiscated by Alamgir on the latter's accession to the throne, and his stately dwelling was given away along with other presents to Husein Pasha,

1. *Mansir-ul-Umara*, by Satiasam-ud-daula, Shah Nawaz Khan, vol. II. pp. 270-276.

Islam Khan, a Turkish grandee who had come to India and settled in the Moghul capital. When subsequently the empire passed into the hands of the English, the building of course became their property. For a time it retained its magnificence. But it could not escape the misfortunes incident upon such a revolution. It was neglected and gradually became a heap of ruins. Parts of the famous dwelling were still in existence till 1857. It had not been swept away when Carlyle visited it in 1872. He says, "This building is now in a totally ruinous and dilapidated condition, only some of its towers and a portion of the empty shell of the walls being now standing. Nevertheless, it is still decidedly the largest, loftiest, and noblest looking ruin about Agra, and well worthy of a visit."¹ Those remnants also soon disappeared, and there was nothing to be seen except an enormous mass of ruins. These ruins continued to be the object of popular interest till steps were taken by Government to have them replaced by a fine park.

A poet alluding to them says, "These knolls that flashes of lightning make visible, were once edifices which fancy took for palaces in paradise, and which equalled no structure in the world. They were the resort of a world."

To the bad or good luck of the town successive inroads of famine at the close of the last century swallowed up the ruins. The debris was removed by the famished gangs of the relief works which had been opened by a generous Government. A vast quantity of ancient silver coin is said to have been excavated. But the loss has been amply compensated by an elegant park which has been laid out by the Government of the United Provinces. It is called MacDonnell Park, a name suggested by the Municipal corporation of the town in honor of Sir Antony MacDonnell who then administered these Provinces.

1. Archaeological Report, Vol: IV. p. 200, by Major-General, A. Cunningham, C. S. I., Director-General, Archaeological Survey of India.

We append as a sequel to the story of the building the family narrative of the builder. Husein Ali Pasha, son of Ali Pasha, was Governor of Busra. He ruled some twelve years more during which he kept friendly correspondence with the Kings of Hindustan and sent them presents. In the third year of his reign, Alamgir received from Busra a letter of congratulation couched in words of sincere friendship together with a present of Mesopotamian horses. At length when the differences between Husein and the people grew intolerable, the Turkish Government sent Yahya to supersede him; he then left for Persia taking with himself his family and a few of his adherents. Finding the country unsuitable, however, he now turned his steps towards India. On his arrival at the Moghal capital the Emperor sent him a robe of honour with a palanquin and a female elephant, that he might wait on His Majesty in a way suitable to his dignity. Hopes of future favours were also held out to him. When he approached Shahjahanabad (1670), he was received at the Lahauri Gate by the Bakhshi, Asad Khan, and the Chancellor, Abid Khan. He presented to the Emperor a ruby worth twenty-thousand rupees and ten horses. The Emperor's gift in return consisted of a Lac of rupees in cash, the rank of *Panj Hazari*, the title of Islam Khan, the mansion of Rustam Khan, well furnished and well decorated and many other things. As the dwelling stood close to the river, a barge also was given him to enable him to conveniently cross over to the Emperor at the latter's residence. His second son Ali Beg, received the distinction of Khan and the rank of *Hazari* with 500 horse. Sometime after Husein Shah was appointed Subahdar or Governor of Malwa. The Emperor wished that he might send for his wife and the rest of his children and settle down permanently. To this however the exile was reluctant. He fell out of sympathy with his Imperial patron, and as a natural consequence, went away and took his residence at

Ujjain, a long way off from the capital. Reconciliation was, however, brought about by the intercession of Umdat-ul-mulk, Khan-Jahan Bahadur, Nazim of the Deccan, and Husein, now called Islam Khan, was restored to his former rank and dignity. In 1087 A. H. (1677 A. D.), the 19th year of the Emperor's reign, he had to fight against the forces of Adil Shah and the grandson of Bahlol of Bijapur. When the battle was now raging a magazine blew up, and the elephant on which he was seated getting frightened rushed into the enemy's ranks. The ropes with which the *howda* was secured gave way. Islam Khan and his son fell down and were killed on the spot. He was a man that would have done right loyal service, but for the sudden mishap. The brave soldier had a poetical genius also. The following is a translation of a Persian quartette composed by him.

"We roamed about forlorn for a time,

"Asking for bread at the door of Providence ;

"Destitute of means we carried a piece of the heart
for a present.

"To carry favour with the dog of our friend."

On Islam Khan's death Afrasiyab was treated more kindly. Additional distinctions were conferred on him. His youngest brother, Mukhtar Beg on his arrival at Ujjain was appointed *Haft Sadi* with one hundred horse, and *Hazari* with four hundred horse. The property of the deceased, consisting of three lacs of rupees and twenty thousand gold pieces, was given up to his representatives. Afrasiyab and Mukhtar Beg continued to enjoy the royal favour, and the latter was honoured with the appellation of Nawazish Khan.¹

THE SHRINE OF SAIYAD JALAL BUKHARI.

Saiyad Jalal Bukhari was the son of Mir Saiyad Muhammad Bukhari Rizvi, a descendant of Shah Alam

1, *Maasir-ul-umara*, Vol. I, pp. 241-246.

in the fifth remove. Shah Alam whose ashes repose at Rasulabad in Ahmadabad, was a disciple of his father, Kutub-Alam, who was grandson of Saiyad Jalal, generally called Makhdum Jahanian Jahan-gasht, which signifies lord of the world and roamer of the world. Kutub-Alam in compliance with the wishes of his father and spiritual teacher, Shah Mohammad, settled at Taboh, a small town about five miles from Ahmadabad. He died in 1453 A. D. His son Shah Alam was born in 1414, and died in 1475 A. D. Mir Saiyad Muhammad besides being his father's successor in the apostolate or spiritual teachership was a profound scholar and a virtuous man—an enlightened *darvesh* of pious resignation. His translation of the Koran is noted for its accuracy and purity of diction. Jahangir was very kind to him and esteemed him highly. He took him with him when he went from Gujrat for a trip over the sea. Shah Jahan went in person to see the Saiyad twice. He found a verse in Persian by Sadi from which the date of his birth can be ascertained according to the method well known to oriental scholars. It has a touch of divine inspiration that can be perceived only by a Muhammadan of pious feelings.

The verse is *من دست و دامن آل رسول* "I with the hand grasping the skirt of the offspring of the Apostle." He died in 1635 A. D. His tomb lies in a dome to the west of Shah Alam's sepulchre at Ahmedabad. Saiyad Muhammad was succeeded by his son, Mir Saiyad Jalal Hasan, who was like his father in character as well as in person. He was a distinguished scholar and a mystic. He was born in 1003 Hijri, (1594 A.D.), this can be deduced from the expression *وارث رسول*, "the heir of the apostle." He came to Agra, in the beginning of Shah Jahan's reign, as his father had directed him. He was most honourably and kindly treated by the Emperor. He then left Agra for a short visit to his birth place. The Emperor now forced him to accept the dignity of

Chahar Hazari and the *Sadarat* of the Indian empire vacated by Muswi Khan. Shortly after he was raised to the *Mansab* of *Shash Hazari*, with one thousand horse. "Saiyad Jalal," says the writer of *Mansir-ul Umara*, "would have most probably been raised to still higher dignities, had he lived longer." He died in the prime of his life in the year 1057 A.H., (1647 A.D.) The date of his death according to the Hijri era is deduced from the phrase *خانشین حیدر گراز* "successor to Haidar the mighty." His tomb lies on an elevated spot by the river side on the road to the Taj Mahal. It is frequented by pious devotees as well as worldly men seeking for a blessing. Shahjahan thought very highly of him. He would not suffer him to be away from him at any time. The Saiyad had a natural aptitude for versification. His poetical designation was *Razai*.

Nawab Samsam-ud-daula, Shah-Nawaz Khan, the compiler of *Mansir-ul Umara*, tells us that Mulla Sufi Mazindrani, who came to India from Persia and resided permanently at Ahmadabad, taught Saiyad Jalal, whom he dearly loved. The Sufi was also a poet. We translate some verses of his :

"Nor throne nor signet, King, can ever last ;
Two yards of ground for thee are hallowed fast ;
Care not when thy coffers are unfilled,
They are refilled if famine's cries are stilled."

Mir Jalal left two sons and one daughter. The elder, Saiyad Jafar, was like his father. He was the *Sajjada-nashin* or official successor to Shah Alam's shrine, when Jalal occupied the chair of the *Sadarat*. The younger, Rizvi Khan Saiyad Ali, was made a *Hazari* with two hundred horses at his father's death. In the 21st year of the Emperor's reign he was appointed a *Pansadi* with two hundred horse, and the following year Purveyor of the royal jewellery and *Pansadi* with fifty horse. Two years later he was Keeper of the King's Library.

it is now a sad wreck. Instead of being an object to charm, it wears a ghastly appearance. The platform measures $9\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ and the stone on the tomb $6\frac{11}{12} \times 2 \times 1\frac{6}{12} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$. In the south of Sati Khanam's sepulchre there is only a hall (*aiwan*), while in the north of this structure there are two chambers and a hall still standing. Thanks to the British Government, the two buildings have been repaired; and the hall and chambers of Sirhindi's sepulchre have had their paintings restored to some extent. Thomas William Beale tells us that a garden was laid out by the Begam at Agra, but it exists no more.¹

ANOTHER SEPULCHRE OUTSIDE THE TAJ MAHAL, EASTWARD.

This building lies at a short distance from the eastern gate of the Taj. Like the two preceding buildings this has also an eight-sided verandah, one side of which is $18\frac{1}{2}$ feet, with three arched doors; the whole verandah consisting of 24 stone arches. One side of the octagonal hall measures $9\frac{1}{4}$ feet inside. Each side has an arched-door filled in with a perforated screen of stone. In the middle is the tomb of marble. Its present state is as pitiable as that of Sarhindi Begam's tomb. This too has been stripped of its valuable gems. The pucca platform round the tomb is $9 \times 4 \times 1\frac{1}{2}$; and the *tawiz* or the upper part $6\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ feet.

The roof is a dome. The building is believed to be the sepulchre of a lady-attendant of Mumtaz Mahal's. There is a grand mosque near the sepulchre.

1. Oriental Biographical Dictionary, by T. W. Beale, p. 363.

THE FATEHPURI MOSQUE.

This mosque stands on a splendid terrace, a short distance from the Mausoleum, opposite to the Dome of the Maids-of-Honor. It is a red-stone edifice. The central arched door is very wide with an elevation of $42\frac{1}{2}$ feet. On both sides of it are halls, each having three arches, $30\frac{1}{8}$ feet high. The whole mosque has twelve arches besides the central one. It is $130\frac{1}{4}$ by 38 feet. The area under the roof contains seats for a congregation of 176. The middle portion is domed. The cupola is of red-stone, beautifully constructed, and like that of the Taj, surrounded with an octagonal terrace or platform, each side of which is $9\frac{5}{12}$ feet. The roof of the flanking halls is flat. On the four corners of the roof turrets are erected. The court, which is paved with stone, is $103\frac{1}{8} \times 55\frac{5}{12}$ feet. Its eastern extremities are furnished with turrets. The building was once decked with frescoes and paintings. Below the mosque on the east there is a verandah of eleven arches with five chambers; on the south the verandah contains 7 arched doors with 3 chambers. Opposite to this, on the north, there are seven arches and three chambers. The western side has only a wall.

The northern gallery and chambers were at one time used by workers in mosaic as their workshops. Plates of mosaic work were manufactured for sale. As they lay however in the way to the Taj and looked unsightly, Government has caused them to be vacated. Near the chambers there is another verandah northwards con-

taining seven arched doors and three inner rooms, with a well close by. These belong to the mosque and were built for the Imam or minister. From an entry in a manuscript which we have procured after hard search, we learn that this structure behind the mosque cost Rs. 677-7-0. The sum is apparently $\frac{1}{2}$ the wages of the workmen employed in raising it. The same is the case with the amount put down by us as the cost of the mausoleum. In the same manuscript the amount of Rs. 29,244-12-0 has been put down as the total expended on the Fatehpuri Mosque. It may be here observed that this house of God was called after Fatehpuri Begam, another wife of Shah Jahan's. She was a virtuous and a pious lady. Another mosque bearing the same name was built by herself at Delhi.¹ The latter still exists and is in good condition. We are grateful to Lord Curzon whose kind attention has restored it to its original state.

THE RESTING PLACE OF THE MAIDS-OF-HONOR.

Opposite the Fatehpuri and to the north of it is the Ossuary of the Maids-of-Honor. It stands in the middle of an elevated square measuring 156 feet. The Maqbura has 8 sides of equal length 9 feet, 8 inches inwards. There are but two plain tombs in the centre of the building, built of marble, and without an epitaph or date. The large tomb measures $6\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{5}{8} \times 2$ feet, and the smaller $4\frac{9}{12} \times 2\frac{1}{2} \times 2$ feet. We have rummaged the records to discover who these beings were that

1. Cf. Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p.132.

repose here but in vain. We then inquired of those versed in written histories and folk-lore, but the information which they gave was indistinct and afforded no clue to the object of our search. It can only be said that in all probability they were the personal attendants of Mumtaz Mahal. The height of the building to the roof is $24\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The cupola of the dome is turnip-shaped and is made of red-stone, its platform is octagonal, each division being $18\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The edifice was in a bad condition. The screens of the arched door-ways as well as the floor had been greatly injured. They have since been repaired by Government at great cost. The red-stone screens have been restored, and the floor re-laid. The corner turrets have also re-appeared, and the courtyard has been paved anew with stone. The building looks quite new now. There are verandahs and chambers to the south, facing those of the Fatehpuri mosque and also to the east. In the middle of the south side there is a stair-case, and on either side of it a red-stone verandah containing 18 arched doors of stone and 10 chambers. The chambers and verandahs were, at one time, occupied by sculptors and workers in mosaic but they have since had to vacate. There is also a verandah to the east with arched doors twenty-one in number.

We have now spoken of the monuments at length.

CORE.

We shall now deal with the expenses incurred in the erection of the several structures referred to above. We shall also refer to the period the several parts took to complete. Mulla Abdul Hamid Lahori concludes his account of the Taj with

the following words :—

“The cost of building the several edifices which are detailed above, and which were completed in nearly twelve years under the supervision of Makramat Khan and Mir Abdul Karim, amounted to fifty lacs of rupees.”¹

From this it would appear that the total expenditure on the *Taj*, the *Jilo-khana*, the two *Khawas-puras*, the *bazars* and the four inns, amounted only to 50,00,000 rupees. This, however, is wholly incredible. But the *Badshah Nama* from which the above quotation has been taken bears the attestation of Shah Jahan and cannot therefore be rejected as unreliable. What the historian really means by “expenditure” cannot now be known. One might roughly estimate the cost of this stupendous monument by reflecting for a moment upon the words, “built at a cost of three lacs,” inscribed above the entrance to the *Moti Musjid* in the *Agra Fort*. The building itself could tell us that the expression, “cost three lacs,” means something else than what it is generally understood to signify. The sum stated is too small to have raised a grand building like the *Moti Musjid* which is considered by Dr. Hunter, in his *Indian Empire*, as the best of its kind in the world. The fact is that the amount specified in both cases denotes, in all probability, the equivalent of what was paid to the workmen and the labourers and out of which miscellaneous petty charges were met. The valuable timber and gems

1. *Badshah Nama*, p. 330, Vol. II.

used for the several buildings were probably supplied out of the royal treasury. The same reasoning may be applied to Sikandra, the sepulchral monument of Akbar, the Great, the cost of which has been calculated by Jahangir in his *Memoirs*,¹ (*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*), at 15 lacs, a sum that would hardly suffice to furnish the wages of workmen and labourers now-a-days. In the same way the inscription above the middle arch of the greater Mosque (*Jama Masjid*) at Agra, shows the cost to be five lacs—a sum which can hardly be believed to include the price of the material used in that splendid building. Wages in those days were certainly low, else the amount specified would have not sufficed even for the establishment of workmen and labourers. An edifice like any one of those mentioned above built in these days, would require ten times the amount spent on its prototypes in the shape of wages and miscellaneous charges; provided ingenious artists like those who produced them could be found now-a days. In a manuscript, which has fortunately come to our hand very recently, a detailed account of the expenses has been entered by the Treasurer, Rodardas. The grand total comes to nearly 3 karors, which includes expenses incurred in the construction of other buildings also spoken of in the preceding pages. We are not, of course, in a position to vouch for the accuracy of these figures. We, nevertheless, enter some of the items here for the

1. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, p. 73, Allahabad Edition, 1864.

information of the curious :—

| Serial No. | ITEM. | Amount. | | |
|------------|--|-----------|----|----|
| | | Rs. | A. | P. |
| 1 | Supplied by the State Office, ... | 97,55,926 | 3 | 0 |
| 2 | Supplied by the State Treasury of the Province of Agra, ... | 53,61,116 | 7 | 0 |
| 3 | Cost of the mosque, the reservoir, the court, and the <i>kalsis</i> , ... | 8,25,821 | 7 | 0 |
| 4 | The four minarets and terrace, ... | 51,77,674 | 7 | 0 |
| 5 | The <i>Tawiz</i> (upper part of the tomb) with mosaic, ... | 55,811 | 2 | 0 |
| 6 | The <i>Rauza</i> ... | 53,45,961 | 10 | 0 |
| 7 | Cost of the <i>Tawiz</i> on Shah Jahan's tomb, | 19,794 | 4 | 0 |
| 8 | „ „ on Mumtaz Mahal's „ | 45,622 | 4 | 0 |
| 9 | Upper <i>Tawiz</i> inside the large dome within the enclosure, ... | 56,152 | 10 | 0 |
| 10 | The cavern underground, ... | 22,990 | 10 | 0 |
| 11 | The tomb of Shah Jahan in the cavern, | 19,691 | 9 | 0 |
| 12 | Gate of onyx with mosaics and gems, | 21,482 | 10 | 0 |
| 13 | The net-work enclosure, one of silver and the other of gold, for the cell, | 45,687 | 14 | 0 |
| 14 | Marble screen with its mosaics, ... | 4,68,855 | 2 | 0 |
| 15 | Sandal doors for the hall of mirrors, | 45,245 | 6 | 0 |

| Serial No. | ITEM. | Amount. | | |
|------------|--|----------|----|----|
| | | Rs. | A. | P. |
| 16 | Brass doors for the minarets of Mumtaz's <i>Rauza</i> , three to each, ... | 25,937 | 3 | 0 |
| 17 | Ebony-doors of the hall of mirrors ... | 45,418 | 10 | 0 |
| 18 | Brass-chains | 75,215 | 14 | 0 |
| 19 | Congregation hall with reservoir and court and <i>kalases</i> | 8,45,615 | 6 | 0 |
| 20 | Turrets, eastward by the Jamna with rooms towards the mansion of Akah Khan, | 1,45,505 | 6 | 0 |
| 21 | Turrets, westward by the river with rooms towards the Basai Ghat ... | 1,65,427 | 6 | 0 |
| 22 | Turrets, westward of the large well with rooms of red-stone, ... | 1,42,510 | 2 | 0 |
| 23 | Middle tower of the balcony with the rooms, | 1,13,918 | 14 | 0 |
| 24 | East tower with red-gate, ... | 1,45,545 | 12 | 0 |
| 25 | South-west tower with red-gate, ... | 1,82,639 | 11 | 0 |
| 26 | East wall of the garden of Mumtaz's <i>Rauza</i> , | 52,675 | 13 | 0 |
| 27 | West wall, | 58,777 | 13 | 0 |
| 28 | South wall, | 87,885 | 12 | 0 |
| 29 | North wall (Jamna side), ... | 1,22,212 | 12 | 0 |

Saiyad Muhammad, Saiyad Mahmud, and Abdul Nabi, a mere child. The first two received the rank of *Hazari* with one thousand horse, and the third of *Pansadi*.¹

An inn of the Khan's is still to be seen at Gwalior. It is in a ruined condition. Nothing of its former splendour remains except the gate. It is called after the builder. Some two hundred yards off, there is also a mosque called after the Khan. Its eastern wall bears the following verses in Persian :—

مسجدے شد بدور شاهجهان مصدر فیض و مظهر ایمان
 ہائی آن مسجدے بصدق و نیاز خادم امل دین نصیری خان
 چون خرد جست مال تارہضی بجهان عرض و نمود عہان

"This mosque became in Shah Jahan's time

The spring of blessings, the place where belief is manifested,

The builder of the mosque is Nasiri Khan,

A servant of the religious, humble and true.

When its date was brought out,"

"The heavens looked on the earth with surprise."

From the last line the date of its erection can be ascertained according to the well known formula current in Persian literature.

On the southern wall are to be seen the following verses of the same description :—

بدور شہنشاہ شاہ جهان بکارہ مسجد بدورس شان
 چوان و جوانمرد فرخندہ بخت پسر خاندوران نصیری خان
 چو تاریخ او جست عقلم زطبع بگفتا بدینجائے فضل و ایمان

"In the reign of the Emperor Shah Jahan

This mosque like Paradise was built

By Nasiri Khan, son of Khan Dauran,

Young, manly, and fortunate.

When its date was sought by my inventive genius,"

A voice cried out "Here is grace and peace."

1. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, Vol. I, pp. 749-758.

Age has discoloured the building. It looks dark and gloomy. A lightning stroke has thrown down the roof, but the walls are still standing with their beautiful turrets. In the court before the mosque there is a large artificial fountain. The court and the fountain both are choked with the fragments and stones belonging to the arches and the halls. On one side of the fountain there are several tombs, one of which looks grander than the rest. Most probably the remains of the distinguished Khan lie beneath the later. All the tombs are without epitaphs. A stone at the head of one, however, contains the holy *Kalima* or the first formula of the Mohamadan faith engraved in relief, but the letters are so worn out that they can only be made out with great difficulty.

Some villages are said to have been set apart for the expenses of the mosque. It once had a garden attached to it, but perpetual autumn reigns there now. At a short distance from it there are a couple of graves besides the small cemetery just spoken of : the masonry enclosure of these only is left. Tradition says they belong to certain princesses. The ornaments on the walls are curious.

To the east of the Taj Mahal and near the shrine of Saiyad Ahmad Bukhari there is an old dwelling. The gate is out of repair. In the north-west there is a tower three stories high, on the edge of the stream. It commands a pleasant view. It is now occupied by a Tannery, and alterations had of course to be made here and there to suit the use to which the building was converted. The underground chamber is not now what it must have been. The Archaeological department should look into it and take the building under its charge.



GARDENS AND OTHER BUILDINGS.

We shall now describe the gardens which existed in the flourishing state during the Moghal period of Indian history, and the buildings that lie on the other side of Jumna over against the mausoleum, Khan Alam's garden, and Rumi Khan's Dwelling. This will help the reader to draw to his mind's eye a picture of the scenes on either side of the stream and to contrast the past with the present.

ACHANAK GARDEN.

This garden is situated near Nunhai, about a mile east from the Char Bagh and to the north of the Jumna. This old garden is supposed to have been originally planted in Baber's reign. The walls enclosing it are 724 by 706 feet. There stood before a tower at each corner, and a stately gate gave entrance to it. In the middle of the southern wall along the river bank, there was a fine building 100 feet long and 75 feet broad. That is no more. There was close by a landing place with a platform 82 by 44 feet. The garden had a goodly hall, 26 feet square in the middle, and about 300 feet removed from the building just mentioned. The hall was crowned with a beautiful dome. The eastern and the western walls contained buildings as well. They were rectangular in form. All of them have disappeared. The vestiges to be seen here and there testify to what they once must have been.

The origin of the name *Achanak* cannot be discovered. It is conjectured by some that Achanak Begam was a princess in the time of Babar and that the garden was called after her, for she dwelt in it. Others are against this theory. They think that it was the residence of Babar himself and of Humayun, his son. The area to the east of the Jumna being too thickly peopled, these two emperors chose to have their dwellings on this side of the stream. The royal mansions were built in the neighbourhood of the villages of Kachpara and Nunhai.

Mounds of earth are still to be seen which help to locate those sites. We are unable to find out when Achanak Garden was planted or its buildings erected. Its location, however, in the vicinity of the royal garden of Char Bagh and the mosques of Babar and Humayun, gives us ground to think that it was laid out by one or other of them. As to the origin of the name we are totally in the dark, although Mr. Beale, tells us that Achanak Begam was a lewd woman with whom Akbar had unlawful connection, but he does not quote or refer to any authority for such a surmise.¹ In Akbar's time the west side of the river was very populous. The sandstone fort, the houses of the nobles and the courtiers, and their splendid gardens, were all built and planted on that side. Had Achanak been a favourite of Akbar, she, too, would have had her garden laid out in the quarter where her supposed lover and his grandees had their dwellings and pleasure-grounds.

The space between the Achanak garden and the Char Bagh is occupied by a cemetery on raised ground. The upper part of the graves is mostly made of red stone, and some have inscriptions on the tomb-stones bearing dates which indicate the age of the cemetery. Some of the graves belong to the times of Sikandar Lodi and Ibrahim Lodi. We give here some of the inscriptions.

(The first tomb.)

این گل نوشگرفتہ - استا جو چک در جمادی الثانی سنہ ۹۱۴ ہجری

"A new flower bloomed—

Usta Jujak, Jamadi II., 914 A. H. (1509 A. D.).

It is not known who this Usta Jujak was. The date, 914 A. H. (1509 A. D.), however, shows that the man lived in the reign of Sikandar Lodi.

(The second tomb.)

On the sides, right and left, are engraved four verses in Persian expressing sorrow for the dead.

1. Beale's Biographical Dictionary, p. 34.

بایلمه خون چکر خورد و گلر حاصل کرد
 باد غمهرت بصدش حال پدیشان دل کرد
 آه و فزاید که از چشم حسود و مه و مهر
 در لبتد خانه کمان ابروے من ملول کرد

"The philomel grieved and writhed with pain,

"The Breeze was extremely disturbed with shame,

"Alas ! away from the jealous eye of the sun and
 the moon,

"My arch-browed darling betook himself to the vault."

The verses stripped of their figures simply mean that the dead was a young person adorned with external and internal graces, of whom even the sun and the moon were jealous, and whose death was universally lamented. The idea is the same as that tersely expressed in

"Those whom the gods love die young."

Head side : الحکم لله تعالیٰ

"His will be done."

Opposite to this : "Shah Muhammad, son of Sultan Mahmud, (died) in 920 A. H. (1514 A. D.).

The name indicates that the dead belonged to the royal family, and that he died in the time of Ibrahim Lodi.

(The third tomb.)

The sides contain the *Ayat-ul-Kursi*, which is a verse in the 3rd part of Koran.

Head side : The holy creed,

"There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His apostle."

On the opposite side there are written four verses in Persian signifying that that flower of the garden of beauty betook itself to Jannat in 941 A. H. (1534 A. D.) This date shows that the youth died in Humayun's time.

(The fourth tomb.)

Head side : The Great Allah, الله تعالیٰ

Foot side: the date of death of the innocent Sad Begi, daughter of Usta Ghulam Ali mason, 945 A. H. (1538 A. D.).

There are many other graves besides, that appear to belong to the time of the Lodis and the early Moghals.

MAHTAB BAGH.

This garden lies to the south-east of Kachpura village opposite the mausoleum. It was formerly surrounded by a wall facing the river having a tower at each end. One of the towers still exists at the south-east corner of the garden. It is eight-sided with a diagonal of $23\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The garden was four-sided, each side measuring about 975 feet. It is now waste, and given up to cultivation. Historians are unanimous in saying that it was planted by Shah Jahan who had contemplated to build for himself a mausoleum similar to one he had erected to the memory of his darling queen, and to connect the two by a strong marble bridge. The dissensions among his sons and his own loss of liberty frustrated this happy design, and he died a disappointed man. Had the plan he had conceived been carried out, the two together connected by a marble bridge would have presented a dream of the Fairy land.

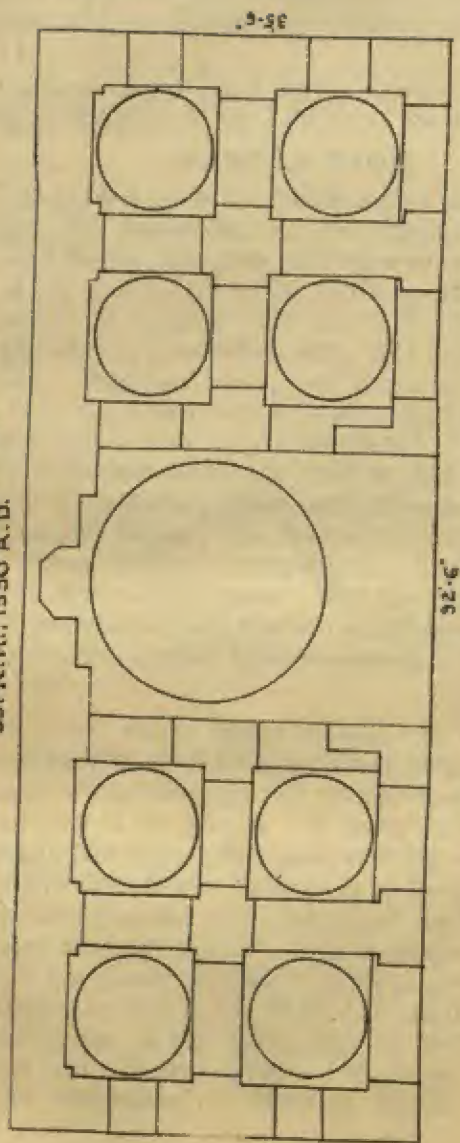
We learn from Major-General A. Cunningham's *Archæological Reports*, (Volume IV of 1871-72, pp. 180-83) that some of the buildings had already been erected in the inclosed area of the garden. Nothing however remains of them in our days. The good and the valuable stones were either sold or were sent away to Deeg or Bharatpur. Ascertaining from the plan and site of the buildings now level with the ground or lying in heaps of ruin, Mr. Carlleyle has nicely calculated in his reports that foundations had been laid in the Mahtab Bagh for the erection of a monument in the midst, flanked by a mosque on the west and a Prayer-cloister for prayer on the east, like the mausoleum of Mumtaz Mahal. Outside the

after 14 days



after 14 days

Ground Plan of Humayun's Mosque.
957 A. H., 1530 A. D.



Agar Khanbar

Bagh there is a large fountain of water westwards, twelve feet distant from it, on a masonry terrace. There comes then a row of no less than nine wells, near to which traces of water-courses and walks are to be seen to the present day.

HUMAYUN'S MOSQUE.

This mosque is situated in Kachpura village between Char Bagh and Mahtab Bagh. It was built under the supervision of Maulana Sheikh Zen-ud-din Khwafi in 937 A. H. (1530 A. D.). Although the buildings of Babar's and Humayun's time have been generally swept away, this mosque has fortunately escaped desolation. It is of course out of repair, and is likely to crumble away little by little.

The middle arch of the mosque is very wide and high, and is capped with a dome. It is flanked with a double row of halls—there being four arches in the northern direction and as many in the southern and all furnished with domes which are smaller and less high than the middle one. The mosque is 93 feet long and 35 feet broad. On a slab in the recess near the pulpit is inscribed the following Persian stanza:—

محمد همایون شاه عرصه دین که بلوای قدوس بود برق گردون
 به فرمان والی و حکم رفیعش مرتب شد این فرش و این سقف و این
 به عاریج انعام این بهت مشعر شاه عرصه دین محمد همایون
 قائم و راقم شهاب معانی غدر ذریه

Its equivalent in sense is:—

"Muhammad Humayun, King of the dominions of Faith,

"Whom to esteem is an honour to heaven,

"By his gracious and noble mandate

This blessed floor and roof was prepared."

"The date of completion can be deduced from this line,

"King of the dominions of the religion, Muhammad Humayun."

"Composed and written by Shahab Mu'min, God forgive him."

The last line, i. e. *شماره دین محمد هم چون* according to the *abjad* formula, gives the date 937 A. H. (1530 A. D.). The Northern wall of the middle arch had also an inscription, but the slab on which it was engraved is gone.

The inscription on the Southern wall, a Persian quartette, is noted below:—

این بقعه بود چون دل صوفی صافی انکار صفای اوست به انصافی
چون یافت بسی زمین خوانی از امام نادم شد بسی زمین انصافی
نیزید باید آنکه بنام زبیدی یاد کند - ناظمه و راقمه شهاب

We give a translation of it also.

"This house is spotless like the heart of a Sufi ;

"To deny this would be unjust ;

"When it got completed by the exertions of zen Khwafi,

"The date came out "from the labour of Zen-ul-Khwafi'."

"Composed and written by Shahab."

The words *بسی زمین انصافی* give the date
937 A. H. (1530 A. D.).

The inscription shows that Maulana Shahab Muimmai composed and wrote the verses.

The mosque was in a very bad condition. The local authorities have, however, saved it from absolute destruction.

Formerly the Archaeological department allotted funds for the repairs of monuments in their charge and the P. W. D. executed the conservation work for that department. It is only since last year that the Archaeological department have begun to conserve their monuments themselves and the amount spent on Humayun's mosque was Rs. 163—6—0 only.

In the neighbourhood of Humayun's mosque there was a school and a monastery established by Maulana Sheikh Zen-ud-din Khwafi. The former has disappeared

The latter has some traces left of it. To the east of the mosque there are on a platform, now on a level with the surrounding land, a number of graves of red-stone that contain the remains of eminent men of letters and of saints of the first two Moghal emperors' time. The young children of the royal family also lie here. Maulana Sheikh Zen-ud-din Khwafi, who superintended the erection of the Masjid of Humayun and established the two charitable institutions just mentioned, is buried in the same enclosure. The author of *Muntakhib-ul-Tawarikh* speaks of him as a man accomplished in secular as well as spiritual attainments. He was familiar with all the branches of Persian literature. He was an excellent writer both of Prose and Verse. His poetical name was Wafai.¹ Some verses of his composition are noted below :

غم گریبان کور شد سرور گریبان چون کشم
 شوق دامنگیر آمد پایدارمان چون کشم
 اے گریبانم ز شوقم تازہ دامن چاک چاک
 بہتو پادر دامن و سرور گریبان چون کشم

"Grief has overwhelmed me and left me helpless ;
 Longing is intense for thee ;
 I am in a wretched plight ;
 Without thee I can do neither this nor that."²

The chief beauty of the verses lies in the language. A translation cannot express it sufficiently. There can be no originality in the latter to strike an English reader.

There is another quartette of his of the same nature.

آرمیدی بر گریبان ورمیدی از ما ما چه کردیم چه دیدی چه شلیدی از ما
 بهر دل بیرون ما حاجت به داد نمود می سپردیم اگر می طلبیدی از ما
 "Thou runnest away from me to my rivals ;
 What have I done? what have you seen, what
 have you heard, of me?"

1. *Muntakhib-ul-Tawarikh* by Abdul Qadir, Badayuni, p. 471, Vol. I. College Press, Calcutta

2. *Ibid* pp. 471-472.

To carry away my heart cruelty was needless;
I could give it away of my own free will, if you
wanted it."

هست شعر من ز مقل و نقل خواجهم بشدود
جامع المعقول و المنقول مولانا حسن

"My verse," says he, "original or borrowed, can be understood only by Maulana Hasan, who is versed in philosophy and in all religious learning." His translation of Babar's Reminiscences is remarkable for its loftiness of diction. He died in 940 A. H., corresponding with 1533 A. D.

Maulana Shahab-ud din who wrote the inscription in the Mosque of Humayun sleeps in the same cemetery. He came to India with Babar who made him his courtier. He was an excellent scholar in allegory. A treatise on the principles of allegory was dedicated to Humayun by him. The emperor appreciated the work at its proper value and sent the author a handsome reward accompanied with a quartette in Persian commending his merits :—

نامت ز عجم ز لنگه بملک عرب است و ز نام تو در دل مستورین طرب است
هر کس بدر آرد ز معنی نامی نام از تو بر آورده معنی عجب است

"Thy name is blazed from Ajam to Arabia (from pole to pole);

Thy work cheers up the sad heart,

Men acquire fame by (works on) Allegory,

Whereas, strange! Allegory acquires fame by thee."

The poet died in 942 A. H., (1535 A. D.), while Humayun was still alive. Akhwand Mir, the compiler of Habib-us-Siar, brought out the date of his death from the words شهاب الثاقب "a meteor."¹

The ashes of Maulana Ab-ul-Wajid also repose in that holy ground. The Maulana was a *darwish* at heart

¹— Beale's Biographical Dictionary, p. 360. and Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh Vol. I, pp. 342-343.

and was noted for his eloquence. This good man and Sheikh Zen-ud-din Khwafi came together to Agra from Kabul. Both left the world in the same year and both sleep in the same grave-yard. Maulana Abdul Kadir says that he (Maulana Ab-ul-Wajid), was buried in the cloister of Sheikh Zen-ud-din at Agra. His poetic designation was Farghi. The following is one of his couplets. It contains the trite allusion to the oppressive indifference shown by a sweetheart to her lover.

از بسکه آن چغا جو آزاد مهلماید اندک توحم او بسداز مهلماید

"Though that oppressor is too cruel,

Yet a little kindness from her is worth much."

He died in 940 A. H. (1533 A. D.).¹

This remarkable necropolis contains the abode of Khwaja Ali, son of Khwaja Moin-ud-din Ahmad, who took his last sleep in the year 956 of the Hijri era, (1549 A. D.)

Some of the martyrs also are interred in it. Their names are unfortunately obliterated. The Persian verses on the tombs tell us something about them. One of them has the following inscription:—

شده سوئے خلد برنوش روان بتکم ارادت چو گشته شهید
شهادت چواریافت تاریخ از آن میگفتا خرد با شهادت رسود

"Dying for his God he departed to paradise,

For He willed it so, and when martyrdom

Sought for the date of his departure ;

Wisdom cried out, "he was a true sacrifice."

In addition to those already mentioned there are other graves, some of which bear pathetic verses in Persian and some text of the Koran, *Ayat-ul-Kursi*, and the sacred names of the Supreme Being, the holy creed and so forth. The Tomb of a young person is

1. Muntakhib ul-Tawarikh by Badaoni, p 475-476, Vol

adorned with two couplets, partly obliterated, which are too touching to be omitted. They are as follows:—

نور سته غامچه ز گاسخان جان برفت وز شاخ نو جوان برقت
باشد هزار حرف که نهد حیات ما بادل نهاد داغ فراق از جهان برقت

"A blossom newly blown was plucked away,
The stem on which it grew was left a moaning;
A thousand sighs on broken hearts, ah ! lay,
A thousand souls were enchained to groaning."

There is no burial-ground at Agra or in its suburbs so miserable conditioned as this of Kachpura. The rustics of village and the travellers that pass by it resort to it for purposes of nature.

Our warmest thanks are due to the Supreme Government that has so generously saved the historic buildings of the Moghal period from destruction. There is one, however, the Mosque of Humayun, the only memorial left here of that monarch, that remains to be looked after. It is in a state of decay and, if it remains out of repairs much longer, will certainly be reduced to a mere heap of ruins.

THE END



Appendix I.

A descriptive list of the Chief Artists.

| Names of artists. | Residence. | Works. | Monthly Pay, Rs. |
|-----------------------|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Muhammud Isa Afandi, | Turkey, ... | Designer & Draughtsman, | 1,000 |
| Sattar Khan, ... | " ... | Calligrapher, ... | 1,000 |
| Muhammud Sharif, ... | Samarkand, ... | Draughtsman, ... | 1,000 |
| Muhammad Hanif, ... | Akbarabad, ... | Supervisor of masons, ... | 1,000 |
| Amnat Khan, ... | Shiraz, ... | Tughra-writer, ... | 1,000 |
| Kalir-Zaman Khan, ... | Arabia, ... | General Artist, ... | 800 |
| Chiranji Lal, ... | Delhi, ... | Mosaicist, ... | 800 |
| Baldeo Dass, ... | Multan, ... | Gultarnash, ... | 690 |
| Munoo Lal, ... | Lahore, ... | Inlayer, ... | 680 |
| Jumna Dass, ... | Delhi, ... | " ... | 680 |
| Abdulla, ... | " ... | Mason, ... | 675 |
| Basharat Ali, ... | " ... | Inlayer, ... | 652 |
| Bhagwan Dass, ... | Multan, ... | " ... | 630 |
| Mohd. Yusuf Khan, ... | Delhi, ... | " ... | 620 |
| Chhote Lal, ... | Multan, ... | " ... | 600 |
| Jhumar Lal, ... | " ... | " ... | 600 |
| Abdul-Ghaffar, ... | " ... | Calligrapher, ... | 600 |
| Wahab Khan, ... | Persia, ... | " ... | 600 |
| Amir Ali, ... | Multan, ... | Gultarnash, ... | 600 |

A descriptive list of the Chief Artists.—(*Concluded.*)

| Names of artists. | Residence. | Works. | Monthly Pay. |
|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Muhammad Sajjad, ... | Balkh, ... | Mason, ... | Rs. 550 |
| Imam Afandi, ... | Turkey, ... | Dome-maker, ... | 500 |
| Muhammad Khan, ... | Baghdad, ... | Calligrapher, ... | 500 |
| Muhammad Siddiq, ... | Delhi, ... | Mason, ... | 500 |
| Ata Muhammad, ... | Bukhara, ... | Sculptor, ... | 500 |
| Abou Yusuf, ... | Delhi, ... | Inlayer, ... | 500 |
| Abou Turab Khan, ... | Multan, ... | Mason, ... | 500 |
| Shakr-ul-lah, ... | " ... | Guitarash, ... | 475 |
| Rashtan Khan, ... | Syria, ... | Calligrapher, ... | 400 |
| Sheoji Lal, ... | Multan, ... | Inlayer, ... | 342 |
| Manohar Dass, ... | " ... | " ... | 295 |
| Kazim Khan, ... | Lahore, ... | Kalas-maker, ... | 295 |
| Madho Ram, ... | " ... | Inlayer, ... | 273 |
| Chintaman, ... | Multan, ... | " ... | 252 |
| Bansi Dhar, ... | " ... | " ... | 244 |
| Hiraman, ... | " ... | " ... | 234 |
| Manohar Singh, ... | Lahore, ... | " ... | 200 |
| Mohan Lal, ... | Kannauj, ... | " ... | 200 |

Appendix II.

The pieces of valuable precious stones sent to Shah Jahan as presents by different kings, Nawabs and Rajas for the building are detailed in the table given below :—

TABLE.
Precious Stones.

| Serial No. | NAME. | Whence brought. | Number of pieces. |
|------------|--|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | <i>Aqiq</i> (Cornelian) ... | Baghdad ... | 540 |
| 2 | <i>Firoza</i> (Turquoise), ... | Tibet [Upper] ... | 670 |
| 3 | <i>Moonga</i> (Coral) ... | Indian Ocean ... | 142 |
| 4 | <i>Lajward</i> (Lapis lazuli), ... | Ceylon ... | 242 |
| 5 | <i>Sulaimani</i> (Onyx) ... | The Devon ... | 559 |
| 6 | <i>Pitunia</i> , ... | Unknown ? ... | 459 |
| 7 | <i>Tilai</i> (Golden stone), ... | " ... | Few. |
| 8 | <i>Musa</i> (Black marble), ... | Jhari ... | 1,075 |
| 9 | <i>Ajuba</i> , ... | Surat ... | Countless |
| 10 | <i>Reg</i> , ... | The Chambal ... | 27 |
| 11 | <i>Bukham</i> (Alabaster), ... | Makrana ... | Countless |
| 12 | <i>Nakkud</i> , ... | Sabalgarh ... | 82 |
| 13 | <i>Magnatis</i> (Loadstone), ... | Gwallar ... | 77 |
| 14 | <i>Bansi</i> (Sand stone), ... | Unknown ... | 34 |
| 15 | <i>Gulabi</i> , ... | " ... | 76 |
| 16 | <i>Jadugar</i> , ... | " ... | 95 |
| 17 | <i>Yashab</i> (Jasper), ... | Cambay ... | 64 |
| 18 | <i>Nilam</i> (Sapphire), ... | Unknown ... | 74 |
| 19 | <i>Zamurrad</i> (Emerald), ... | " ... | 42 |
| 20 | <i>Abri</i> (Bloodstone), ... | Gwallar ... | 427 |
| 21 | <i>Dahanu-i-farang</i> [Melachite] ... | Russia ... | 614 |
| 22 | <i>Ghori</i> , ... | Cambay ... | Countless |

| Serial No. | NAME. | Whence brought. | Number of pieces. |
|------------|--|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 23 | <i>Tamra</i> (Garnet) ... | The Ganges ... | 52 |
| 24 | <i>Tamani</i> (a Carnelian of Arabia Felix), ... | Yaman or ... Arabia Felix ... | 23 |
| 25 | <i>Pai-Zahar</i> , ... | Kannan Hills ... | 616 |
| 26 | <i>Lohavala</i> (Chrysolite), ... | The Nile ... | Countless |
| 27 | <i>Khara</i> ... | The Jumna ... | 677 |
| 28 | <i>Billoer</i> (Crystal) ... | Hyderabad [Deccan] | 74 |
| 29 | <i>Punkhani</i> , ... | Balkh ... | 87 |
| 30 | <i>Godar</i> ... | Gwalior ... | 1,600 |
| 31 | <i>Marwar</i> (Marble) ... | Jeypur ... | 22 |
| 32 | <i>Sumaq</i> ... | Arabia ... | 575 |
| 33 | <i>Khatwa</i> , ... | Jesalmere ... | 340 |
| 34 | <i>Taqst</i> (Ruby), ... | Badakhshan ... | 142 |
| 35 | <i>Hira</i> (Diamond), ... | Panna, C. I. ... | 625 |
| 36 | <i>Sashk</i> (Conch-shell), ... | Ocean ... | 44 |
| 37 | <i>Marmarid</i> (Pearl), ... | Ocean ... | 50 |
| 38 | <i>Sip</i> (mother of pearl), ... | " ... | 1,00,000 |
| 39 | <i>Sarkh</i> [Red stone] ... | Gwalior ... | 643 |
| 40 | <i>Ghar</i> ... | Jubbulpur ... | Countless |
| 41 | <i>Badal</i> [Cloudy stone], ... | Dholpur ✓ ... | 65 |
| 42 | <i>Pukhray</i> [Topaz] ... | Unknown ... | 97 |

The discerning eye of a virtuoso alone can observe what a variety of precious stones of different kinds are united in all curious ways. The variegated figures and the ornaments, which beautify the building, all form a perfect miracle. The visitor, who has an eye for the beautiful and the sublime, is lost in admiration.



No. 5.

Panoramic view of the Taj with its mosque and Jamaat khana from the river-front.

Appendix III.

Opinions of well-known authors and writers
about the Taj.

1. 'Shah Jahan himself has written the following verses in Persian in honour of the monument. The language is polished, elegant and chaste.

ابیات مصطفی شاهجهان

ز به مرقوم پاک ببلقدس عهد که بانی افاق را گشت مهد
ملور مقامی چو باغ بهشت معطر چو فردوس عطر سرشت
بصفتش ز خال معطر بهشت بجوارب و زان دوش رفقه حور
جواهر نگارست دیوار و در هوا زاده تر چو آب کپ
عسارت گر این مقدس حذاب ز سر چشمه فیض آورده آب
برین بقعه پاک والا مقام بهشع گدای اهر رحمت مدام
اگر مستحرم آمد بهین در ینا شود هدیه مغفور پاک از گداه
اگر عاصی آمد بهین دوشه روی گدای نامه خیرش را شست و شوی
ز دولت به نظاره این ملور شود چشم خورشید و سه اشکبار
نمود این عسارت بعد روزگار نه طاعه شود قدوت نردگار

An attempt has been made in the following lines to express the royal writer's idea in blank verse :—

How excellent the sepulchre of the lady of Bilqis's* fame
That a cradle for the body of the Princess of the world became.

Like the garden of heaven a brilliant spot,

Full of fragrance like paradise fraught with ambergris.

* Bilqis was a queen of the city of Saba in Yaman in the time of Solomon the Prophet. She was famous for her beauty and was a fire-worshipper. Solomon, according to the Mussalman writers, sent her a letter inviting her to renounce the faith of her ancestors and embrace that of his own. He sent this letter through a hoopoo bird which acted as a messenger. The Queen presented herself to the Prophet and became a convert to his faith. She became the concubine of the Prophet. Hafiz, the celebrated poet of Shiraz, has said with reference to the message of hoopoo to the city of Saba :—

مژده بدل که دگر باد صبا می آید

هد هد خوش خبر از شه صبا می آید

Had mind ! for once more has blown the morning breeze ;
The hoopoo from the city of Saba has brought the happy tidings.

In the breadth of its court perfumes from the nose-gay
of sweet-heart rise,

The nymphs of paradise use their eye-lids for cleaning its
threshold.

Its walls and gates glitter with gems,
The air is there fresh and delightful like the brilliancy of
pearl.

The architect of this sacred edifice
Brought water for it from the fountain of grace.
On this sacred edifice of high renown
Showers of mercy are ever pouring.
Should guilty seek asylum here,
Like one pardoned, he becomes free from sin.
Should a sinner make his way to this mansion,
All his past sins are sure to be washed away.
The sight of this mansion creates sorrowing sighs
And makes sun and moon shed tears from their eyes.
In this world this edifice has been made
To display thereby the Creator's glory.

2. His Royal Highness Albert Edward, Prince of
Wales remarks:—

"Most writers who have tried their hands at a description of the Taj set out with the admission that it is indescribable, and then "proceed to give some idea" of it. I do not know how many of the fair ladies present agreed with Colonel Sleeman's wife, who said to him, "I cannot criticise, but I can tell you what I feel, I would die to-morrow to have such a tomb." Holy and profane men, poets, prosers and practical people all write of the Taj in the same strain. "Too pure, too holy to be the work of human hands!" — "a poem in marble!"—"the sigh of a broken heart!"—"poetic marble arrayed in eternal glory!"—"the inspiration is from heaven—the execution worthy of it!" But the Taj with 7000 spectators—7000 people who came to look at the Prince of Wales looking at the Taj! Well, it played its part to perfection."

3. The buildings at new Delhi and Agra, which are still the admiration of the world and which necessitated the imposition of no taxes or the use of oppressive measures,

1. The Prince of Wales Tour by William Howard Russell, pp. 442-443.
Chapter XI, 1877.—

were erected under Shah Jahan's personal superintendence. The Taj Mahal at Agra, the mausoleum of the Empress Mumtaz Mahal built of marble and inlaid with precious stones is, says Dr. Pope, "in solemn brilliance unsurpassed by any human erection," and was his most famous work.

4. "It is lovely beyond description but the loveliness is feminine. It awakes ideas of fair complexioned beauty; the soul is dead; the form, the charm, the grace of beauty are lingering there. The walls are like muslin dresses, radiant with flowers and jewels. The perforated marble gates are like lace veils."¹

5. "In regard to colour and design, the interior of the Taj may rank first in the world for purely decorative workmanship; while the perfect symmetry of its exterior, once seen, can never be forgotten, nor the aerial grace of its domes rising like marble bubbles into the clear sky. The Taj represents the most highly elaborated stage of ornamentation reached by the Indo-Muhammadian builders—the stage at which the architect ends and Jeweller begins."²

6. "The graceful flow, the harmonious colours and, above all, the sparing use of this rich ornament, with the mild lustre of the marble on which it is displayed, form the peculiar charm of the building, and distinguish it from any other in the world. The materials are lapis-lazuli, jasper, heliotrope or blood-stone, a sort of golden stone with chalcedony and other agates cornelians, jade and various stones of the same description." "A single flower in the screen," says Mr. Voysey (*Asiatic Researches*, Vol V., page 434), "contains a hundred stones, each cut to the exact shape necessary and highly polished" and "yet" says Bishop Heber, "though everything is finished like an ornament for a drawing room chimney-piece, the general effect produced is rather solemn and impressive than gaudy."³

7. "This building, too, is an exquisite example of that system of inlaying with precious stones which became the great characteristic of the style of the Moghals after the death of Akbar. All the spandrils of the Taj, all the angles and more important architectural details, are heightened by

1. *History of India* by J. Talboys Wheeler, p. 263, Vol: IV, Part, I

2. *Imperial Gazetteer of India* by W. W. Hunter, Vol. I, page 74.

3. *Elphinstone's History of India*, p. 598, footnote, Book X Ninth edit.

being inlaid with stones, such as, agates, bloodstones, jaspers, and the like. These are combined in wreaths, scrolls and frets, as exquisite in design as beautiful in colours; relieved by the pure white marble in which they are inlaid, they form the most beautiful and precious style of ornament ever adopted in architecture. This mode of ornamentation is lavishly bestowed on the tombs themselves and the screens that surround them though sparingly introduced on the *masjid* that forms one wing of the Taj, or on the fountains and surrounding building."¹

8. James Fergusson writes of it, "With its purity of material and grace of form, the Taj may challenge comparison with any erection of the same sort in the world. Its beauty may not be of the highest class, but in its class it is unsurpassed."² As observed by a writer, "while the sepulchral works adorning the valley of the Nile will be regarded as wonders of art for their solidity of construction and sublimity of conception; the Taj at Agra shall always call forth the admiration of mankind for its being the most exquisite specimen of human architecture and the most gorgeous romance of wedded love."

9. "But there is one work of art in India, which they are all agreed to admire and that is the Taj Mahal. It is the high water mark of the artistic worship of every civil servant and of every officer. Each one of them has his own peculiar views about it. These are not concerned so much with the style of its architecture or with its relation to other buildings, as with the manner in which you ought to see it. Here you should take your first view—here your last. There are even schools of doctrine as to these matters, there are morningites and eveningites, moon-lighters and mid-dayers, but they are all agreed that the Taj, is the one incomparable building in India and in the world; and if it ever occurs to them that the keenness of their own æsthetic susceptibilities has been a little blunted by the effects of their work and of the climate they feel themselves together even in their old age and say, "At least I love the Taj." See the Taj, it will fascinate you so as to deprive you of all power of laudatory expression and it will haunt you ever

1 The Monumental Antiquities and Inscriptions, N. W. P. and O., described and arranged by A. Führer, Ph. D., Archaeological Survey, Vol. II., pages 63 and 64.

2 Fergusson's History of Eastern and Indian Architecture, Vol: III, p.599.

after till your dying day. It will float in the clear Tuscan air above the bell tower of Giatto and arise across the lagoon besides the Doge's palace and St. Mark's."¹

10. "Although Akbar is distinguished for having built for the defence of his capital the unequalled fort at Agra with its splendid palace, and although he converted the stony ledge of Fatehpur Sikri into an architectural vision for an illustration of his reign, and although he built for himself at Sikandra a monument more admirable than that of Cheops, nevertheless, it remained for a descendant to raise a monument more exquisite than any of these—a monument, indeed, which is admitted by the whole world to be the most beautiful that the earth has ever beheld."²

11. "There is no mystery, no sense of partial failure about the Taj. A thing of perfect beauty and of absolute finish in every detail, it might pass for the work of genii, who knew nought of the weakness and ills with which mankind are beset."³

12. "It is too pure," says a writer, "too holy to be the work of human hands. Angels must have brought it from heaven and a glass case should be thrown over it to preserve it from every breath of air."

13. A distinguished Russian artist describes it as "A lovely woman; abuse her as you please, but the moment you come into her presence you submit to its fascination."

14. Mr. Keene remarks, "Admitting that there is something slight and effeminate in the general design, which cannot be altogether obliterated or atoned for by the beauty of decoration, the simile seems just, and it calls to mind the familiar couplet in *The Rape of the Lock*—

"If to her share some female errors fall,
Look in her face and you'll forget them all."⁴

15. "No description, however vivid or precise," observes the late Bishop French, "no colouring, however, brilliant or varied, even if supplemented with paintings or drawings, can give one a correct idea of the Taj for its nobleness, an edifice unparalleled in the annals of Eastern architecture."

1. By Mr. Oscar Browning, Professor at Cambridge, printed in the *Observer* of 21st November 1883.

2. W. H. Seward's *Travels around the world*, pages 434 and 435.

3. By Bayard Taylor.

4. *Handbook to Agra* by H. G. Keene, p. 29.

16. "For five and twenty years of my life had I been looking forward to the sight now before me. Of no building on earth had I heard so much as of this, which contains the remains of the Emperor Shah Jahan and his wife. We had ordered our tents to be pitched in the gardens of this splendid mausoleum, that we might have our fill of the enjoyment which every body seemed to derive from it; and we reached them about eight o'clock. I went over the whole building before I entered my tent, and, from the first sight of the dome and minarets on the distant horizon to the last glance back from my tent-ropes to the magnificent gateway that forms the entrance from our camp to the quadrangle in which they stand, I can truly say that every thing surpassed my expectations.....After my quarter of a century of anticipated pleasure, I went on from part to part in the expectation that I must by and by come to something that would disappoint me; but no, the emotion, which one feels at first, is never impaired; on the contrary, it goes on improving from the first *Coup d'œil* of the dome in the distance to the minute inspection of the last flower upon the screen round the tomb. One returns and returns to it with undiminished pleasure; and, though at every return one's attention to the smaller parts becomes less and less, the pleasure which he derives from the contemplation of the greater, and of the whole collectively, seems to increase; and he leaves with a feeling of regret that he could not have it all his life within his reach, and of assurance that the image of what he has seen can never be obliterated from his mind, "while memory holds her seat." I felt that it was to me in architecture what Kemble and his sister, Mrs. Siddons, had been to me quarter of a century before in acting—something that must stand alone—something that I should never cease to see clearly in my mind's eye, and yet never be able clearly to describe to others.

I asked my wife, when she had gone over it, what she thought of the building? "I cannot," said she, "tell you what I think, for I know not how to criticize such a building, but I can tell you what I feel. I would die to-morrow to have such another over me?" "This is what many a lady has felt no doubt."¹

1. Rambles and recollections of an Indian official by Major-General Sir. W. H. Sleeman K. C. B. pp. 377, 378, 382—Vol. I.

17. This building is a vast dome of white marble, nearly of the same height as the Val De Grace† of Paris, and encircled by a number of turrets, also of white marble, descending the one below the other in regular succession. The whole fabric is supported by four great arches, three of which are quite open and the other closed up by the wall of an apartment with a gallery attached to it. There the Koran is continually read with apparent devotion in respectful memory of *Tage Mehale* by certain *Mullahs* kept in the mausoleum for the purpose. The centre of every arch is adorned with white marble slabs whereon are inscribed large Arabian characters in black marble, which produces a fine effect. The interior or concave part of the dome and generally the whole of the wall from top to bottom are faced with white marble; no part can be found that is not skilfully wrought, or that has not its peculiar beauty. Everywhere are seen the jasper and jachen, (*yashm*) or jade, as well as other stones similar to those that enrich the walls of the Grand Duke's chapel at Florence, and several more of great value and rarity, set in an endless variety of modes, mixed and enchased in the slabs of marble which face the body of the wall. Even the squares of white and black marble which compose the pavement are inlaid with these precious stones in the most beautiful and delicate manner imaginable.

Under the dome is a small chamber wherein is enclosed the tomb of *Tage Mehale*. It is opened with much ceremony

† Above the facade of the church of the deaf and dumb asylum of Val-de-Grace, designed by Fr. Mansart, and built in 1645-68, rises the famous dome, which is a reduced copy of that of St. Peter's at Rome, 133 feet high and 53 feet in diameter. The principal dome of the Taj is 80 feet high and 58 feet in diameter, and very much more gracefully proportioned, and with infinitely finer lines than the Val-de-Grace dome, which can easily be verified by a comparison of photographs of the two structures. Tavernier (*Travels* vol. 1, pp. 110, 111) was of the opinion that the dome of the Taj is scarcely less magnificent than that of the Val-de-Grace and adds that he witnessed the commencement and accomplishment of the building of the Taj, 'on which they have expended twenty two years, during which twenty thousand men worked incessantly; this is sufficient to enable one to realise that the cost of it has been enormous. It is said that the scaffoldings alone cost more than the entire work, because, from want of wood, they had all to be made of brick as well as the supports of the arches; this has entailed much labour and a heavy expenditure. Shah Jahan began to build his own tomb on the other side of the river, but the war which he had with his sons interrupted his plans, and Aurangzeb, who reigns at present is not disposed to complete it.'

once in a year, and once only; and as no Christian is admitted within lest its sanctity should be profaned, I have not seen the interior, but I understand that nothing can be conceived more rich and magnificent.

It only remains to draw your attention to a walk or terrace, nearly five-and-twenty paces in breadth and rather more in height, which runs from the dome to the extremity of the garden. From this terrace are seen the Jumna flowing below, a large expanse of luxuriant gardens, a part of the city of Agra, the fortress, and all the fine residences of the Omrahs erected on the banks of the river. When I add that this terrace extends almost the whole length of one side of the garden, I leave you to judge whether I had not sufficient ground for asserting that the mausoleum of Taj Mahal is an astonishing work. It is possible I may have imbibed an Indian taste; but I decidedly think that this monument deserves much more to be numbered among the wonders of the world than the pyramids of Egypt, those unshapen masses which when I had seen them twice yielded me no satisfaction, and which are nothing on the outside but heaps of large stones piled in the form of steps one upon another, while within, there is very little that is creditable either to human skill or to human invention."

18.—"This morning we sallied out before breakfast to have our first view of the famous Taj Mahal. We had heard such ravishing descriptions of its beauty that we expected to be disappointed, as people usually are when anything is over-praised. We drove two miles outside the town, and were landed at a splendid gateway, made of red sandstone interlined with marble, so imposing that we thought it a fine mosque, but it only serves as an approach to the fairy-like structure of pure white marble, which bursts upon your sight as soon as you enter the gateway. We stood spell-bound for a few minutes at this lovely apparition; it hardly seems of the earth, earthy. It is more like a dream of celestial beauty. No words can describe it. We felt that all previous sights were dimmed in comparison. No such effect is produced by the first view of St. Peter's or Milan or Cologne Cathedrals; they are all majestic, but this is enchantment itself. So perfect is the form that all other structures seem clumsy. The first impression it gives is that of temple of white ivory, draped in white Brussels lace. The exquisite carving and

tracery on the walls look like lace rather than sculpture. A beautiful dome crowns the building and four graceful minarets stand at each angle some distance apart; they remind one of the Eddystone Light-House, built of white marble. Such is the dazzling whiteness that it looks like a work of art when first unveiled; but it is 250 years old, and was built by the Emperor Shah Jahan, in honour of a favourite wife. It seems descending to the region of the common place to say that it cost 3 millions sterling, and took 17 years to build, and employed 20,000 workmen.

The first view of Taj is said to be from the top of the gateway, some 400 yards in front of it. I climbed to this point and contemplated leisurely the glorious vision in front of me. The foreground is filled up with a grove of deep-green foliage, very refreshing to the eye under the dazzling glare of the sun, and looking like an oasis amid the parched and dusty plains of India. In the middle of this grove lies a long narrow pool of water, lined with cypress. Masses of flowering shrubs relieve the deep green especially the red blossom of the *bougain villia*, which hangs in immense clusters; sometimes the whole tree is one blaze of colour. Bright-plumed birds flit about the trees, especially the gay green parrot, and a confused hum of chirping is heard all over the place. It is a veritable earthly paradise!

The great dome of the Taj, flanked with its four graceful minarets, like so many satellites, has a softness of colour and outline which rests the eye. The Taj itself stands upon a great marble platform, raised some feet above the ground, and it again rests upon a still larger basement of red sandstone. The building is thus raised above all the surrounding country and can be seen from a great distance. Many fine buildings are injured by common-place surroundings, for instance, St. Paul's and Cologne Cathedrals, and so their effect is partly lost. Not so the Taj. It gleams like a light-house over all the plain of Agra; it is reflected on the broad bosom of the Jamna, which flows on one side, and the spacious windings of the river form one of the finest features of the landscape which spreads before me.

I find it beyond my power to describe the architecture. The building is square in form, rounded at the edges with a great alcove or hollow arch in the middle of each side. Two smaller double alcoves fill the spaces between the great ones; four smaller domes or cupolas stand on the roof round the great central dome; the four large minarets stand at the four

angles of the great marble platform, several hundred feet from the main building. Two very handsome mosques face the Taj on the right and left, each built of red sandstone inland with white marble, and crowned with three white domes. The surface of the Taj is ornamented with the choicest inlaid work. India was ransacked for precious stones to adorn it. The windows are covered with fine marble screens, cut into graceful patterns. Long rows of Arabic characters in black are inlaid into the white marble; these are verses from the Koran. So numerous are they that one-eighth of the whole volume is said to be engraven on the building.

But I must now descend from my perch and give some account of the interior of the edifice. I seat myself on the tomb erected to Shah Jahan in the interior, under the great dome. We have entered by a door in the central alcove. At first it seems dark, after the bright sunshine outside. No direct light falls into the interior; it is like a shell within an outer case, and the light percolates dimly through the marble fret-work. The tomb of the Emperor and that of his favourite wife lie side by side. They are of white marble inlaid with rich gems; emeralds, turquoises, agates, cornelians, lapis lazuli and coral abound. A railing or screen of pierced marble, wrought into elegant designs, surrounds the tombs. After remaining sometime in the interior it appears quite light, and one can see that the vaults are covered with inscriptions from the Koran. Nothing strikes one in Mohamedan countries more than the reverence paid to their sacred book. A dado runs round the whole interior, of marble beautifully carved into flowers and vases done on panels each surrounded with a running scroll of inlaid work of precious stones.

A wonderful echo is heard when a chord of music is struck, reverberating round the hall, and dying into stillness. It is said to surpass that of the famous Baptistery of Pisa. I have once more changed my point of view, and mounted to the top of one of the minarets, 130 feet high, and look into the very heart of the Taj as you might do into the snowy ravines of the Alps from a neighbouring peak. The dome is now seen to be of an oval shape not unlike an inflated balloon. Four minor domes or turrets surround it, and 16 little minarets outflank the turrets. The two mosques and the noble gateway, like a sort of triumphal arch, look very well from this point. One more feature deserves to be mentioned. The great Fort of Agra, with its huge double wall, built by

Akbar, fills up the landscape on the west, and beyond it the city of Agra is seen peeping out of a forest of trees. A great railway bridge spans the Jumna a little way off. Here I must stop, for impatient voices call me down"¹

The following poetical productions of lady authors in praise of the mausoleum would not be devoid of interest to our readers:—

I. "O thou! whose great imperial mind could raise
This splendid trophy to a woman's praise!
If love or grief inspired the bold design,
No mortal joy or sorrow equalled thine!
Sleep on secure! this monument shall stand,
When desolation's wing sweeps o'er the land,
By time and death in one wide ruin hurld,
The last triumphant wonder of the world."²

II. "Pure as Mumtaza's spotless fame,
The unsullied marble shines;
Rich as her lord's unrivalled love,
The wreathes that deck their shrines.
On fanes more glorious I have gazed,
Witnessed St. Peter's dome;
And costlier gems shine bright around,
The Medician tomb.
But this Love's temple-beauteous pile,
The pride of Eastern art!
This boasts the present deity,
That seizes on the heart.

All ruling Power! to thee we bend,
Thy potent charm we own,
This structure, simple, graceful, pure,
Oh! this is Love's alone!"³

III. No Eastern prince for wealth or wisdom famed,
No mortal hands this beauteous fabric framed,
In death's cold arms the fair Mumtaza slept,
And sighs over Jumna's winding water crept,
Tears such as angels weep, with fragrance filled,
Around her grave in pearly drops distilled.

1. "My Life work" by Samuel Smith, Member of the Parliament, pp. 184-187, dated Agra, 15th February 1886.

2. By Lady Nugent, wife of Sir George Nugent, late Commander-in-Chief.

3. By Mrs. C. Fagan, the wife of Colonel C. Fagan, Adjutant-General under Lord Cambermere.

There fixed for ever firm, congealed they stand,
A fairy fabric, pride of India's land.¹

- IV. "Not architecture! as all others are,
But the proud passion of an Emperor's love,
Wrought into living stone, which gleams and soars,
With body of beauty shining soul and thought;

* * * As when some face
Divinely fair unveils before our eyes—
Some woman beautiful unspeakably—
And the blood quickens, and the spirit leaps,
And will to worship bends the half-yielded knees,
While breath forgets to breath. So is the Taj!"²

These quotations may have enabled the reader to form some idea of the magnificence and beauty of the mausoleum which stands unrivalled. The monument is unique, and is the admiration of travellers from all parts of the world. The artistic skill displayed in its construction is nowhere else is to be seen. Its workmanship is peculiar. Its floral ornaments are, in some places, so fine as to outshine the performances of a painter's pencil. Its ancient as well as modern namesakes—the mausoleum erected by Artimisia at Halicarnassus, those Augustus and Hadrian, or that erected in France by Catharine-de-Medici—do not even approach the mausoleum of Mumtaz in elegance and splendour. The mosaic work of Mumtaz's monument would astonish the famous workman, Losus of Pergamos, if he were living to view it. The sciences of mechanics, painting, calligraphy, optics, and others have all been drawn upon to produce this great wonder of the world.

Lord Roberts has rightly said :—

"I now for the first time saw the lovely Taj Mahal—that beautiful, world-famed memorial of a man's devotion to a woman, a husband's undying love for a dead wife. I will not attempt to describe the indescribable. Neither words nor pencil could give the most imaginative reader the slightest idea of the all-satisfying beauty and purity of this glorious conception. To those who have not already seen it, I would say: 'Go to India. The Taj alone is well worth the journey'."³

1. Anonymous.

2. By Sir Edwin Arnold.

3. Forty-one years in India by field-Marshal Lord Roberts of Kaudabar, V. C., K. P., G. C. B., G. C. S. I., G. O. I. E., p. 151., 1898.



AGRA FORT- PLAN OF THE PALACES.



APPENDIX IV.

To enable our readers to have an idea of the famous and interesting archaeological buildings of the environs of Agra, I append hereto a brief account of each of them. A detailed account of all the historical monuments of Agra and Fatehpur Sikri will be published shortly.

AGRA FORT.

The imposing structure of the Agra Fort on the right bank of the Jumna was built by Akbar in 1571. It does not all belong to its founder as numerous additions have subsequently been made by his successors, particularly by Shah Jahan, the palace builder.

From the Delhi Gate arising metalled road, modern of course, runs North-East through an arid tract to the *Moti Masjid* or Pearl Mosque, which measures externally 243 ft. from east to west and 187 ft. from north to south. The external face is cased with red sandstone, while the interior of the mosque, with its spacious court cloisters, domes and octagonal pavilions at its front corners, is made of white marble. To quote Bayard Taylor "In all distant views of the fort these domes are seen like silvery bubbles which have rested a moment on its walls, and which the west breeze will sweep away." It bears an inscription in Persian characters which records that the building was completed in 7 years, at a cost of 3 lacs of rupees, towards the end of the 26th regal year of Shah Jahan, corresponding with the year 1063 A. H. (1654 A. D.).

The road descends on the left to the *Darshani Darwaza*, which dates back to Akbar's time and "in which" according to Finch and others the King looks forth every morning at sunrise, which he salutes, and thus his nobles resort to their "Tessillam" or taslim which means to make usual obeisance; while on the right it leads to the *Mina Bazar* which is built of red sandstone, and comprises rooms once used as shops of traders doing a thriving business with the nobles and ladies of the court in silks, jewellery etc. It is said to date from the time of Akbar.

The next building we reach is the *Diwan-i-'Am* (or the Hall of Public Audience) with its spacious court in

front. It measures 201 ft. from north to south and projects 67 ft. westward from the westwall of the Machchhi Bhawan. It is entirely of red sandstone but the white polished stucco, which covers its pillars, arches and ceiling, makes them look like marble; while the richly gilded salient lines on them add much to their deceptive appearance. Some are inclined to think that Akbar built this hall in the latter part of his reign, while the popular tradition asserts that it was built by Aurangzeb in the 27th year of his reign. The latter is obviously erroneous as Aurangzeb left Agra as a capital in 1668, and in 1685, or the 27th year of his reign, after the conquest of the kingdom of Bijapur in the Deccan. Accounts of Terry, Hawkins and Finch, however, lead us to conclude that the Diwan-i-Am—minus its stucco plaster and the adornments of the throne-room which were added by Shah Jahan, dates from the time of Akbar.

In the spacious court opposite the Diwan-i-Am is a profusely decorated structure of coloured stone and white marble, enclosed within an iron railing. It is the *Tomb of the Hon'ble J. R. Colvin*, the Lieutenant Governor, N. W. P., who died in the fort during its siege by the mutineers of the Bengal Army in 1858.

Hauz-i-Jahangiri, or the Cistern of Jahangir, is really a curiosity. This enormous bowl—5 ft. in height, 4 ft. in depth, 8 ft. in diameter and 25 ft. in circumference hewn out of a single stone, was built, according to a mutilated inscription on it, for Jahangir in 1019 A. H. (1610 A. D.), and as this was the year of his marriage to Nur Jahan, it is not improbable that the inscription now obliterated may have stated that it was presented to her.

Returning to the Diwan-i-Am, the Machchhi Bhawan, or the first of the palaces, is reached by mounting the staircase in its backwall. It displays a pure Saracenic art and consists of a court enclosed on all sides by a ground floor, (which is built entirely of red sandstone), surmounted by a first floor on all but the east side. It is said that the water of the Jumna was conveyed by artificial channels into the courtyard of the palace and used to be accumulated here to form a store-house for fishes which afforded sportive amusement to the Emperor and the ladies of the harem who took delight in ensnaring them. Hence this name Machchhi Bhawan or Fish Palace. Suraj Mal Jat carried away its

marble tanks to Dig during the Jat supremacy and used these materials in the construction of his Garden houses, bathing ghats etc. at Bharatpur.

The Nagina Masjid or the Gem mosque is built of pure white marble. It was a Zanana mosque although ignorant guides make mendacious inventions that Shah Jahan was imprisoned in this mosque by Aurangzeb.

Diwan-i-Khas, or the Hall of Select Audience, built in 1046 A. H. (1637 A. D.) by Shah Jahan, consists of two halls and measures 64 ft. 9 inches by 34 ft. Though not so large as those at Delhi and elsewhere, it is a beautiful marble building which displays artistic decorations of the Persian style and in which, as Havell rightly thinks, the designer has ingeniously translated the conventional Indian flower-beds into marble.

In front of the *Diwan-i-Khas* are placed two open-air thrones, one of white marble on the Machchhi Bhawan side and the other of black slate facing the river front. A Persian inscription runs round the latter throne and says that it was made in 1011 A. H. (1603 A. D.) for Jahangir. The date is prior to the death of Akbar. The throne appears to have been made to commemorate the recognition of Salim, as heir-apparent to Akbar the Great. From side to side of this throne a long fissure was opened, not because it was profaned by Jawahir Singh of Bharatpur during the Jat ascendancy, but as a result of Lord Lake's cannon ball striking against it in 1803, and a bullet-hole in the northern face of the *Diwan-i-Khas* goes a long way to corroborate the statement.

From the *Diwan-i-Khas* a doorway leads to the *Musamman Burj* or Octagonal Tower (or the Jasmine Tower of the European writers), was, according to the local tradition, erected by Shah Jahan. But I think I should concur with Fergusson in his opinion that its architecture suggests Jahangir to be its founder, although the *pietra dura* decoration used in the beautiful little fountain hollowed in the floor in front of the Octagonal Tower seems to point out that Shah Jahan had his hand in its construction or is responsible for, at least, some additions of which unfortunately no record is forthcoming. Shah Jahan is said to have breathed his last in this pavilion whence his body was removed to be buried in the Taj beside the tomb of his beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal.

Next we step into the *Zanana* apartment, consisting with the *Khas Mahal* etc. which form the river side of the Anguri Bagh or Vinery. It is a very charming block of buildings of white marble, elaborately carved and commands a fine view of the river and the Taj at a distance. The *Khas Mahal* was a small drawing-room of Shah Jahan who, as a Persian inscription on its walls states, built it in 1636 A. D. In front of the *Khas Mahal* a large courtyard called the *Anguri Bagh* or Grape Garden, extends 220 ft. north and south by 169 ft. East and West. It is said to have been built by Akbar for his *Zenana*. It is of considerable value to us in as much as it provides us with a typical specimen of the old Mughal gardens laid out in geometrical flower-beds, with four terraced walks radiating from the central platform and fountain.

On the north of the Anguri Bagh a passage leads to the bath of the *Zenana* called the *Shish Mahal* or "Palace of Mirrors." Walls and ceilings are gorgeously studded with innumerable fragments of looking glass, disposed in the most intricate designs. Ask the Archaeological peon on duty to bring in a light and the charming reflection on its mirror-mosaic you will not find easy to forget.

The actual quarters of Shah Jahan once used as the museum of the Archaeological Society of Agra, contain the *notorious gates of the Ellenborough proclamation, and so called of Somnath*. These doors built of Himalayan cedarwood are 12 ft. high and 9 ft. broad, covered with an Arabic inscription in Cufic characters which Maulvi Ashraf Husain of the Archaeological Department has recently deciphered. Most certainly they are not the Somnath Gates. They belong to Mahmood Ghaznavi's sepulchre at Ghazni, as Mr. Fergusson thinks, and the inscription referred to above supports his conjecture.

South of this palace stands a magestic edifice of red sandstones called the *Jahangiri Mahal*. It possesses a fine two-storied facade which bears the name of Jahangir. One of the two inner courts of this palace is 70 ft. square and the presence of Hindu brackets and other architectural details suggest its close similarity to some of the buildings at Fatehpur Sikri. The charming marble pavilions of Shah Jahan and the virile, yet imaginative, architecture of this palace built by Akbar suggest a striking evolution in the taste

of Mughal architecture. It is said that Akbar built it for his son Jahangir after he had shifted his capital from Fatehpur Sikri to Agra at the request of Sheikh Salim Chishti.

Akbari Mahal—This place which is said to have formed the southern section of the Great Mughal's seraglio, was once a very extensive palace comprising 3 sets of female apartments south-east of the Jahangiri Mahal. It has so completely yielded to the ravages of time that its traces even, which have recently been discovered by excavation, do not seem to give us an idea of its former grandeur. To mark the site however, the Archaeological department has planted shrubbery which also serves the purpose of hiding from our eyes the unsightly foundations which presented an eye-sore in the neighbourhood of so elegant buildings.

Abul Fazi says that a new fort of red sandstone was built on the site of the old fort under the orders of Akbar, the Great. A number of 3,000 to 4,000 masons and artisans was employed daily on the work. It was built in 8 years at a cost of about 35 lacs of rupees under the Superintendence of Qasim Khan, the Lord of the Admiralty.

THE JAMA MASJID.

Opposite the Agra Fort Station, on the north-west, stands the Jama Masjid or the Cathedral Mosque. It is situated on a raised platform and reached by a broad flight of steps, eleven feet high. The main building is divided into three compartments surmounted by curious domes built of white and red stone in oblique courses and producing a somewhat singular though pleasing effect. There are five archways in the front, one large and two smaller ones on each side, all opening on a spacious courtyard. The central archway is over 40 feet in width. At each corner of the roof stands an octagonal domed cupola and the front is adorned with a row of smaller square cupolas. The mosque is a fine structure of red sandstone. The inscription on the main archway shows that it was built in 1058 A. H. (1648 A. D.), by Jahan Ara Begam, eldest daughter of Shah Jahan, called Begam Sahab, at a cost of five lacs of rupees and took five years to complete. The tomb of this noble hearted and pious princess lies near Khusrô's tomb outside Delhi, and is the resort of travellers.

SIKANDRA.

The mausoleum of Akbar the Great lies in Sikandra, a village about five miles from Agra. It stands in a large garden of 150 acres in extent surrounded by lofty walls with four gateways in the midway of each side. The principal portal on the south side, upwards of 70 feet high, is elaborately ornamented by bold inscriptions in the flowing graceful Tughra character. The inscriptions set forth the praise of the monarch and the mausoleum. The name of the Emperor Jahangir, the son of Akbar, is given as that of the founder and it is stated that the work was completed in the seventh year of his reign, corresponding to 1613 A. D.

At the end of a broad stone causeway rises the mausoleum on a raised sandstone platform. The building is of four storeys, each smaller than that below it, the topmost storey being of white marble and surrounded with beautiful screens of the same materials. In the centre on a raised platform is a solid block of pure white marble, representing the real tomb in the vault below. At the head is the inscription "*Allah-o-Akbar*," (God is Great), and at the foot "*Jalla Jalalahu*" (Magnificent is His Glory), and round about it the ninety-nine names of Allah are sculptured in *alto relievo* in a remarkably fine Arabic tracery. The upper storey is now open to the sky, but formerly there was a canopy of gold and silver brocade suspended over the platform.

The vaulted vestibule was decorated with flowers raised in gold, in silver and enamel, and a bold inscription in gold raised upon a blue ground runs around it. From this room a long narrow passage leads to a plain gloomy chamber and beneath a simple marble tomb rests the Great Akbar.

Jahangir states in his Memoirs that fifteen lacs of rupees had been spent in the building.

Tomb of Etmad-ud-Daula.

The tomb of Etmad-ud-Daula is on the east or left bank of the river. It stands in the centre of a garden on a raised platform, 149 feet square and $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet above the ground, with an octagonal tower somewhat squat in proportion, at each corner. The beauty of the building is due to its being entirely built of white marble and inlaid with coloured stones and representing in arabesque beautiful patterns of flowers, cypress, trees, vases and other decorations in *pietra dura* as in the Taj. The tombs of Etmad-ud-Daula and

of his wife Ismat-un-Nisa Begam lie in the central hall, a parallelogram measuring 22 feet and 3 inches on each side. The stone of the tombs is of a yellow variety of porphyry of high polish and elegance. The floor is of marble, richly decorated with mosaic. The sides of the chamber are lined with marble inlaid with mosaic, and the ceiling is most elaborately ornamented with gold and silver and coloured flowers. The hall is surrounded by small chambers occupied by the tombs of other members of the same family. Above the central chamber there is a marble pavilion on a slightly raised platform. It has a canopy-shaped roof with wide projecting eaves and is supported on twelve marble pillars with marble screens of exquisite pattern, wrought like lace between them. In the pavilion are two altar tombs like those in the chamber below but of plain marble and contain no inscription.

"In Etmad-ud-Daula's tomb," says Fergusson, "we have both systems (mosaic and inlay work) in great perfection." They are strictly Indian art of Moghal period and not in the least Florentine in character. Havell rightly says: "There is not, however, a trace of Italian art in any detail of the building, there is not a form or decorative idea which had not been used in India or in central Asia for centuries."

The mausoleum was built by Nur Jahan, the favorite wife of Jahangir, in the memory of her father Etmad-ud-Daula, who was grandfather of Mumtaz Mahal, the lady buried in the Taj. Mirza Ghias Beg whose surname was Etmad-ud-Daula died in 1622. The mausoleum was commenced the same year and finished in 1628.

Chini-ka-Rauza.

On the left bank of the river beyond Etmad-ud-Daula's tomb is the Chini-ka-Rauza, a rectangular building nearly 80 feet square surmounted by a great bulbous dome, with a spacious central octagonal domed chamber, having in the centre two brick cenotaphs. It has four side chambers on each side. The whole of the south-western corner has fallen down. On the top of the central chamber and on the exterior walls Quranic texts have been inscribed. The decorations with the exquisite variegated enamel colours of the tiles still extant on the outer walls amply testify the richness and magnificence of the Persian Art.

The Rauza contains the remains of *Allami Afzal Khan Mulla Shukrullah* of Shiraz who was a great scholar of Arabic and Persian. He entered the service of Jahangir about the year 1617 A. D. and secured the post of *Diwan* (Prime Minister) under Shah Jahan by his literary accomplishment. He died at Lahore in 1639 A. D. but was buried at Agra in this mausoleum which he had built for the purpose during his life-time.

Aram Bagh.

This garden, the present nomenclature of which is Ram Bagh, was founded by Jahangir for his favorite queen Nur Mahal, commonly known Nur Jahan. The tradition says that the plan of the garden was taken from one at Kabul, which was called Bagh Nur Afshan. The change in the name of the garden is due to the calamitous campaign of Agra by the Jats of the neighbouring state of Bharatpur. The historians have mistook this garden for the ancient garden named *Bagh-i-Gul Afshan* or *Char Bagh*, which was founded by Emperor Babar and served as the temporary repository of Babar's coffin till its removal to Kabul. The latter garden according to the own Memoirs of Babar and also to those of Jahangir stood on the opposite or on the east side of Etmad-ud-daula's tomb and the existing oblong hall called "Chauburji" is the keepsake of the memory of the temporary reposing room of the remains of the famous Moghal king, Babar.

The historians have unfortunately made a similar mistake in connection with the outlines of the Jahan Ara Bagh which they have presumed to be Zuhra Bagh. There was no such princess as Zuhra amongst the daughters of Babar and the real fact is that the villagers in their dialect called Jahan Ara as "Jahenra" which has been misunderstood as Zuhra.

I think I must lay down my pen here, otherwise this book which was simply intended as the History of the Taj will grow unduly large.

Remarks on the original publication.

1.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE:

Naini Tal, 25th April 1904.

SIR,

In reply to your letter of the 21st April, I am desired to say that His Excellency the Viceroy is leaving Simla on the 28th instant. The book has been a labour of love to the author and is a valuable guide to the Taj.

Yours faithfully,

(Sd.) H. G. S. TYLER, I. C. S.,

Private Secretary.

2.

No. $\frac{G. 4186}{XII.-1}$ of 1904-1905.

FROM

C. F. DELA FOSSE, Esq., M. A.

*Offg. Director of Public Instruction,**UNITED PROVINCES.*

TO

M. MUHAMMAD MUIN-UD-DIN,

GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT,

*Collectorate, Muttra.**Dated Allahabad, the 6th December 1905.*

SIR,

With reference to your letter, without date, received on the 21st ultimo, I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the book sent therewith, and to thank you for the same as also for the information so kindly furnished by you in respect of the manuscript History of the Taj.

I have, &c.,

(Sd.) K. P. KICHLU, M. A.,

HEAD ASSISTANT,

*for Offg. Director of Public Instruction,**UNITED PROVINCES.*

3.

FANTASIA :

March 22nd, 1905.

DEAR M. MUIN-UD-DIN,

I am much obliged to you for making me a recipient of your publication on the Taj. I trust I shall be similarly favoured when you are bringing out the further contribution promised in your preface.

Will you permit me to suggest that a handsomely bound copy forwarded to Lord Curzon ought to prove acceptable. You refer to that nobleman's services in the cause of the conservation of ancient historical buildings in India; but that is not enough; let him be furnished with practical evidence of the fact that there are persons yet in the country who besides possessing an eye for the beautiful in architecture, are capable of deep and persistent research into the history of the past, and that their observations can be the fruit of assiduous investigation.

Your book abounds with careful thoughts. Here and there an original fact is disclosed evidencing close study and the habit of analytical reasoning. It is the most exhaustive account yet published of the Pearl of Indian Edifices, and whoever peruses it cannot but be impressed with your enthusiasm.

I quite agree with you, there is no foundation whatever for the allegation that a Venetian or a Frenchman had a hand in the designing or the construction of the Taj. That is a pure fabrication of the Europeans's brain who consider that no good can exist anywhere but what comes out from them. I myself combated this view when revising the Gazetteer of Agra some three years ago.

I hope you will kindly accept a volume of my "*Mariam*", which I am sending you through Fakhr-ud-din.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) J. F. FANTHOM.

4.

The Observer of the 5th November 1905.

MUEEN-UL-ASAAR.

This is an interesting book describing in full the history of that one of the most beautiful monuments in the

world, the *Taj*, and its environments. The author has prepared this work with the greatest care and taken personal measurements of the edifices which he describes. In spite of strict adherence to truth, the style is so charming that it is difficult for the reader to leave the book without reading it from cover to cover. A brief but comprehensive life of Mumtaz Mahal adds fresh interest to the book. Every detail with regard to the Mausoleum, the names and number of the chief builders employed, the area, height, expense and special features of the monument are all given at sufficient length. A comparison is drawn between the *Taj* and Italian palaces, showing its points of superiority over the latter. The claims of some European travellers as to French and Italian builders having conceived the design or taken a leading part in its execution are exploded in an admirable manner. Excellent pictures of 'A Gate of the *Taj*,' and 'A View of the *Taj*,' make the book still more interesting.

5.

By Nawab Muhsin-ul-Mulk, Maulvi Mahdi Ali Khan, published in the issue, dated 27th June, 1904, of the Aligarh Institute Gazette.

Maulvi Moin-ud-din, General Superintendent, Collector's Office, Muttra, has written the history of the *Taj* at Agra, with great diligence and careful search, extending not only to old and new printed books and manuscripts procurable on the subject, but to personal inspection and examination of the building. The author has measured each important part and closely noticed its workmanship. Such a book was indeed a desideratum. It will be an important addition to the Urdu literature and architectural history of early times. I concur with a European lady in saying that it is a pity that the name of the man who prepared the plan of this matchless building still remains undiscovered. How many of us are aware—how much the edifice raised to the memory of lawful affection cost? What gems compose the nicely and curiously executed pieces which look as if formed of molten stone? Whence obtained? Who superintended and supervised the building? What joyous scenes and social meetings were witnessed there? Whose tale its neighbours tell? The volume before me speaks of them all, and of many useful and interesting things besides, in a way quite worthy of the beauty and elegance of the structure chosen

for its theme. I would gladly recommend it to those who take interest in the relics of former days, and love the priceless monuments of this country—the glory of civilization. The author has laid his countrymen under an everlasting obligation to him. To devote a few minutes spared from the turmoils of “National reforms” and “Poverty of the country,” to the contemplation of the original through the medium of the picture drawn by the author, would be a refreshing pause.

6.

By Shams-ul-Ulama, Maulvi Shibli, Noman.

“I have gone through the work on the Taj. It is a nice book indeed—based on careful investigation of facts. The language is elegant and clear. I have found it interesting. I hope others will read it with pleasure.

31st May 1904.

7.

By Shams-ul-Ulama, M. Altaf Hosen, Hall.

I have received your unrivalled work, the history of the Taj sent to me by M. Mazhar-ul-Haq. I have read most of it. I am sorry I could not get sufficient time to examine the book well enough to set forth its beauties in detail. I, therefore, say only so much that your performance has really laid the country under an obligation to you. There is no other book of the kind treating the subject with such a careful investigation of facts, amplitude and detail, as the one now reviewed. One who visits this building of surpassing beauty or is fond of ancient architecture, could study the book with advantage. We hope your hard labour will be gratefully rewarded by a wide circulation of your work among those who take interest in such subjects.

8.

By M. Saiyad Hasan, District Judge of Aurangabad,
dated 7th August 1904.

I heartily thank you for your kind present of a copy of Muin-ul-Asar. The valuable compilation is really the outcome of patient labour. The delineation of the building can be fully appreciated by one thoroughly acquainted with it. Visitors from distant lands anxious to know the history of the Taj had no means of satisfying their longing, except the worthless information gleaned from the attendants

there. This compilation has well supplied the want. In short, it has laid under an obligation not only the present and future generations, but those worthy souls that lie in a state of oblivion in the Rauza and its neighbourhood, giving us the sad warning that their lot is the common lot of man. An English version would be a useful companion to the original.

It is hoped that your labour will receive kind attention from Government.

9

By Mashaghil-i-Ilmi and Review (Literary Reviewer.)

Muin-ul-Asar or the History of Agra."

This book is written by M. Muin-ud-din of Agra, General Superintendent of Muttra Collectorate. The writer has ably handled the subject. The unrivalled and famous Taj with other buildings of historical importance, is described in detail. Where necessary the measurement is conducted by the writer himself. The description of the building commences with a short life of the person with whom it is associated. It has been visited by visitors from distant countries for a long time. The ordinary 'guides' have been found unsatisfactory. This small work has well supplied the want. The statement that the plan of the Rauza was devised by an Italian Engineer is clearly shown to be incorrect. The cost of the building, the duration of its erection, the architects and artists employed on it, with their salaries, and the kinds of the stones of which the building is made or its ornamental work is composed, are all distinctly specified. Nice photos are also inserted here and there. The style is attractive.

10.

The Pioneer, dated the 2-4-1906.

The Taj—Md. Moin-ud-din, General Superintendent, Muttra Collectorate, has prepared and issued "a History of the Taj and the buildings in its vicinity" and copies were accepted by the Prince and Princess of Wales before their departure from India. The book gives a very interesting account of the Taj and of the artists who were employed in its construction.

11.

Alwar, Rajputana, dated, 3-4-1906.

I have read an excellent review of your book "History of the Taj" in the Pioneer and shall be glad if you can send me

a complimentary copy. I will return it, if desired by you.
I am glad the Royalty have spoken so well of your book.

Yours faithfully
(Sd.) B. N. KHAINBHOTA,
MILITARY SECRETARY TO
H. H. Maharaja of Alwar.

12.

Naini Tal, dated, 18-4-1906.

Sir,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of parcel containing 6
copies of your book on Taj.

I am sending them to Private Secretary to H. E. the
Viceroy, (Lord Curzon).

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) ALFRED GASELEE.

13.

Hawkadale, Naini Tal, 23rd April 1906.

Sir,

I am requested by the Private Secretary to H. E. the
Viceroy to thank you for the copies of your on Taj.

I am leaving for England on 25th.

Believe me,
Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) ALFRED GASELEE, Lt. General.

14.

Kashmir, 3-7-1906.

Before this, I hope you have received my letter written
to thank you very much for the copy of the "History of the
Taj," which I have read with great interest.....

I thank you again very much for your kindness in
sending me a copy of the "History of the Taj." It is a very
interesting record of that great historical tomb.

(Sd.) Colonel A. E. Sandbach, R. E.
Commanding B. S. & M.

15.

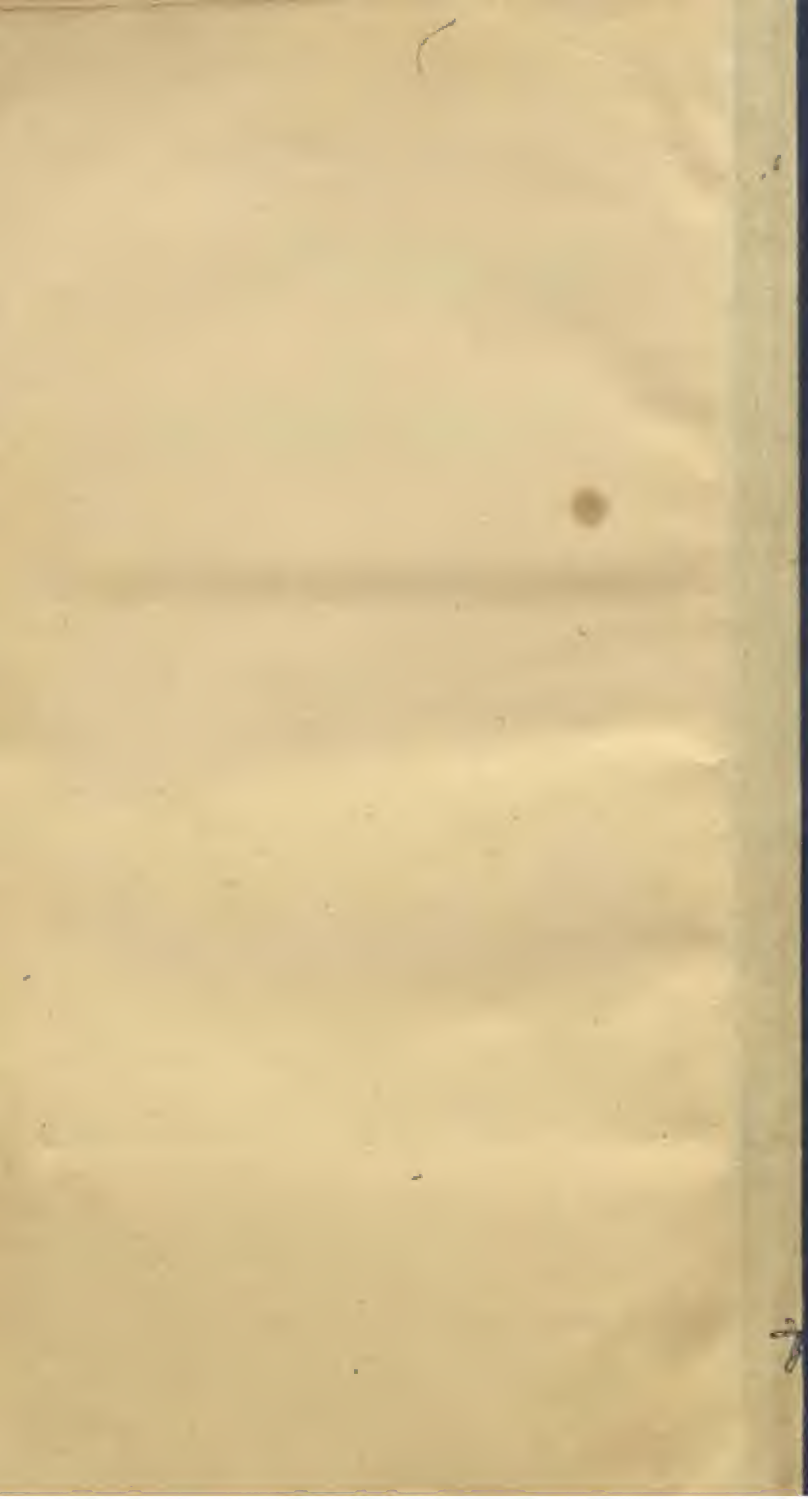
No. A.5 of 1907-1908 dated Allahabad, the 17th April 1907.

His book, viz, "The History of the Taj and the build-
ings in its vicinity."

Has the honour to inform him that the above has been
recommended for libraries.

(Sd.) Secretary,
Text Book Committee, U. P.





Central Archaeological Library,
NEW DELHI. 22881

Call No

913.05/Mol

Author—

Mohd. udin Ahmed.

Title—

The Taj and its
Environment

Borrower No.

Date of Issue

Date of Return

M.C. Jash

2-12-71

15-5-83

"A book that is shut is but a block"

CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL LIBRARY
GOVT. OF INDIA
Department of Archaeology
NEW DELHI.

Please help us to keep the book
clean and moving.